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A Sure and helpful guide to purposeful living

A REVERENT APPROACH TO LIFE

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**of immense help and comfort to all.
A simple, honest and truthful philosophy.
Gleaned from the writings of the world's
great masters.**

B. O. GANAPATHY



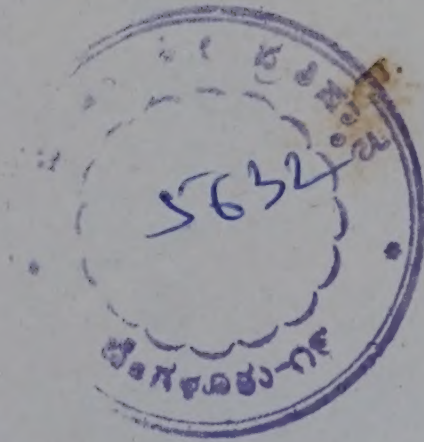
A Reverent Approach to Life

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B. D. GANAPATHY



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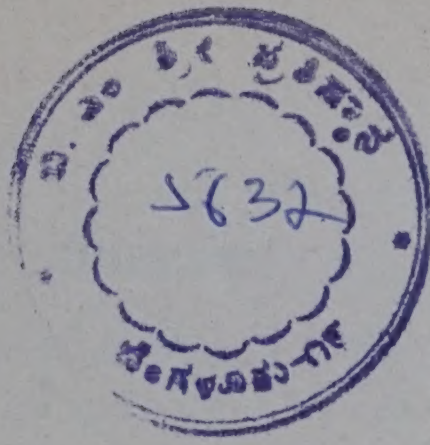
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To My Children

Lajwanthi (Gangamma) and Lahar (Deviah)
Symbols of Female and Male species of mankind.

MY CHILDREN

“Do you know that your souls are part of my soul?
That you are the very fibre and core of my heart?
None can pain me as you my children can do.
None other can please me or praise me as you.
Remember the world will be quick with its tongue
If shadow or stain ever darken your name,
Like mother, like children is the saying so true
The world will judge largely of mother by you
Be this then your task, if task it shall be
To force the proud world to do homage to me.
Be sure it will say, when the verdict you have won
She reaps as she sowed. These are her children”

—Margaret Johnstone Grafflin



A COUNSEL

“ We are beings of the universe, we pride not ourselves on any one country, we insist not on any one religion, nor do we enchain ourselves in any one sect or caste. To roam about in the garden of world's best thoughts will be our diligent study, to digest them will be our constant endeavour and to eliminate their contradictions will be our unfailing creed. To develop an universal attitude by sympathising the peculiarities will be our endeavour in the sphere of thought.”

—Vinoba

A CAUTION

“If you love knowledge, you will be masters of knowledge. What you have come to know, pursue by exercise, what you have not learnt, seek to add to your knowledge, for it is as reprehensible to hear a profitable saying and not grasp it as to be offered a good gift by one's friends and not accept it ”

—Socrates

Before reading further think it over

Are you willing—

To forget what you have done for other people and to remember what other people have done for you;

To ignore what the world owes you and to think what you owe the world;

To put your rights in the background and your duties in the middle distance and your chances to do a little more than your duty in the foreground;

To see that your fellowmen are just as real as you are, and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for happiness and joy;

To own that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you are going to get out of life, but what you are going to give to life;

To close your book of complaint against the management of the universe, and to look around for a place where you can sow a few seeds of happiness.

Are you willing to do these things even for few minutes a day?

—Henry Van Dyke

A Reverent approach to Life

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS LIFE

My Dear Children,

When I think of you, your birthday stands clearly in my memory's eye. Your birthday is the beginning of your own personal new year. Your first birthday was a beginning and each new birthday is a chance to bring again, to start over, to take a new grip on life.

It is a time to consider the wisdom of Socrates, "The unexamined life is not worth living." It is time to reevaluate your past as a guide to your future. It is a time to remind you that "Saints are Sinners, who kept on trying."

It is a time to toss old hatreds, resentments, grudges and fears into the waste-basket of the past, a time to forgive and forget, a time to stretch your soul.

It is a time to list the things you have left undone, and to do something about them; the visits you have failed to make, the words unspoken, the letters unwritten, the tasks unfinished.

It is a time to dust off your dreams and shine up your ideals. Remember the great words of William James that "the great use of life is to spend it on something that will outlast it."

Having said this, let us see what life is?

"Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment and I want

to make it burn as brightly as possible, before handing it on to future generation ”¹

“ A man does not commence to live until he finds an immovable centre within himself on which to stand, by which to regulate his life and from which to draw his peace. If he trusts to that which fluctuates he also will fluctuate, if he leans upon, which may be withdrawn he will fall ; if he looks for satisfaction in perishable accumulations, he will starve for happiness in the midst of plenty ”²

“ Life is greater than all art. I would go even further and declare that the man whose life comes nearest to perfection is the greatest artist for what is art without the sure foundation and frame-work of noble life ? There is an art of living as well as an art of dying. The latter consists of facing death cheerfully in the performance of one's duty ”³

“ Whether life is noble or ignoble depends not on the calling which is adopted but on the spirit in which it is followed. The humblest life may be noble while that of the most powerful monarch or the greatest genius may be contemptible. It is not so much the hours that tell, as the way we use them. Life must be measured by the thought and action rather than by time.

Every day is a little life and our whole life is but a day repeated. Those therefore that dare lose a day are dangerously prodigal, those that dare misspend it desparate.”⁴

“ Life is spontaneous. When you admit that human life can be guided by reason, all possibility of life is annihilated. One can only live while one is intoxicated with life. As soon as one is sober, it is impossible not to see that it is all a mere fraud and a stupid fraud.”⁵

“ Life never seems so clear and easy as when the heart is beating faster at the sight of some generous, self-risking deed. We feel no doubt then, what is the highest price the life can win. We almost believe in our power to attain it.”⁶

“ Life cannot be safeguarded by property, power and material things. Understand that this is an absurd deception with which you deceive yourself”⁷

“ The trading capital for the business of a successful life is verily the will to succeed. He who lacks in it is but a roadside tree with human form.”⁸

“ Life is an unfoldment and the further we travel the more truth we comprehend. To understand the things that are at our door is the best preparation for understanding those that are beyond.”⁹

•

“ Life is like a quarry, out of which we are to mould and chisel and complete a character.”¹⁰

“ Life belongs to the resilient ones, to those who caste aside cant, hypocrisy and envy and have no funny notions about being more important and more privileged than other folks.”¹¹

“ Life consists not in attainment but in the effort to attain, not in success but in the struggle to succeed.”¹²

“ We are all lamps and our life constitutes the flame of the lamp. When supply of oxygen is cut off, the lamp will go out. The best we can do therefore is to keep the lamp clean.”¹³

Keeping the lamp clean is a great adventure and the joy of life comes only to those who look upon this adventure with joy.

“ As is a tale, so is life,
Not how long it is,
But how good it is ”¹⁴

LET US LEARN TO LIVE

There is difference between existence and life. Mere existence binds us with the creatures of the universe and man being an intelligent being is not content with that sort of existence. He has chalked for himself a way of life, a purpose which has made his living meaningful.

“For it is clearly to be understood that we live in deeds not in years; in thoughts not in breaths; in feelings not in figures on the dial; we should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives who thinks most, feels the noblest, and acts the best.” ¹⁵

One fundamental thing that we should understand about life is that “it is a journey, not a home; a road, not a city of habitation; and the enjoyments and blessings we have are but little inns on the road-side of life; where we may be refreshed for a moment, that we may with new strength pass on to the end, to the rest that remaineth for the people of God.” ¹⁶

“The inexorable and inescapable truth is that we have no escape from life, we have to live in this world and it is the only inevitable thing in life.” ¹⁷

Therefore my children,

“Get up and set your shoulders to the wheel. How long is this life for? As you have come to this world, leave some mark behind. Otherwise where is the difference between you and the trees and stones? They too come into existence, decay and die?”¹⁸

“Learn the lessons of life. Life is a series of lessons. Some are diligent in learning them, and they become pure, wise, and altogether happy. Others are negligent and do not apply themselves and they remain impure, foolish and unhappy.”¹⁹

“For life is a battle without armistice, without mercy, in which he who wishes to be a man, worthy of the name of man, must ever fight against whole armies of invisible enemies, against murderous forces of nature, uneasy desires and dark thoughts treacherously leading him to degradation and destruction.”²⁰

But the most unfortunate thing is “the life of every man is a diary in which he means to write one story and writes another, and his humblest hour is when he compares the volume as it is with what he hoped to make it.”²¹

Even then one should not be discouraged for “There is nothing more dynamic than life; even if he is unnoticed,

away from the haunts of men and unpublicised, the very mode of his living, his thoughts, emotions and inspirations will help all others in ways we do not know, for all are parts of one whole ”²²

“ However mean your life is, whatever may be the station you are placed, meet it and love it, do not shun it and call hard names. Life consists not in holding good cards only but in playing those you hold well and with good grace.”²³

“ Be such a man or woman and live such a life that if every man or woman were such as you and every life a life like yours, this earth would be God’s paradise.”²⁴

“ Think what a death in life it must be an existence whose sole aim is good eating, and drinking, splendid houses and elegant clothes! Not that these things are bad in moderation and with something higher beyond. But with nothing beyond? ”²⁵

“ Our life is divided into three terms ; that which was, which is, and which will be. Let us learn from the past to profit from the present and from the present to live better for the future. ”²⁶

Hence we should

“ Live for the causes that lack assistance
The wrong that needs resistance
For the future in the distance
And the good that we can enhance ” ²⁷

We should also bear in mind that we should have pure ideals backed with necessary actions. “ Life like waters of the seas freshens only when it ascends towards heaven ” ²⁸

If you look objectively you will find “ Hope is the pivot around which life revolves. Those who hope for no higher life are dead even for this. Life will give you what you ask of her if only you ask long enough and plain enough.” ²⁹

But the tragedy is that “ we never live; we are always in the expectation of living; for we hope and wait but life is to think and act ” ³⁰

“ In all matters affecting our weal or woe, we should be careful not to let our imagination run away with us, and build no castles in the air. We often try to banish the gloom and despondency of the present by speculating upon our chances of success in the future; a process which leads us to invent a great many chimerical hopes. Every one of these contains the germ of illusion and disappointment is inevitable when our hopes are shattered by the hard facts of life ” ³¹

“There is no phantasy here but we come to His shore as strangers, live in His house as guests and should leave His door as friends ” ³²

FAMILY LIFE

Every man or woman belongs to one or the other family. Family is the unit of our social life. It is the foundation on which the society of man is built. Hence family life not only contributes immensely to an individual's happiness but also the guiding factor for the peace and happiness of mankind.

Family is built on the foundation of faith, love, sacrifice and good will. Mother is the fountain head that binds the family with her unbounding love and father is the watchman who wards off all the dangers and contributes his all for the happiness of the family. Under these two protecting 'Gods' the children with loving care make it a home.

Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam
Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home ;
A charm from the sky seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek through the world, is never met with
elsewhere.

Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
There is no place like home ” ³³

The family or the home is invigorated by the common aspirations and objects of the members. These may include the yearning for poise, the desire for progress, the craving to touch the lofty peaks and the longing for harmony and peace. These aspirations which hew divinity out of each member of the family elevate the family thus laying a solid base for the super structure i.e., society.

“How sweet ’tis to sit ’neath a fond father’s side,
And the caress of a mother to soothe and beguile,
Let others delight mid new pleasures to roam,
But give me, Oh, give me the pleasure of home,
Home, Home, Sweet, Sweet Home.” ³⁴

Our home joys are the most delightful the earth affords and the joy of parents in their children is the most holy of humanity. It makes their hearts pure and good, it lifts men up to their father in heaven ” ³⁵

“Home is the resort of love, of joy, of peace of plenty, where supporting and supported, polished friends and dearest relatives mingle into bliss” ³⁶

Hence it must be the policy of the good old gentlemen to make their children feel that home is the happiest place in the world and I value this delicious home-fee as one of the choicest gift a parent can bestow ” ³⁷

“Build your house upon a rock ” was the advice of our ancestors. There is no stronger rock than love. Those who are wise build their homes—I mean, contract marriages—on the rock of true love. One must be over careful in this and should enter into the altar with sobriety, sanity and with the knowledge of what to expect of marriage. For you must know that marriage is not a temporary thing nor is it an individual thing. Marriage is not an end in itself. It is life and has for its

purpose, not the gratification of individual desire, but the highest good of the community and civilisation.

You should not be shy of marriage. Marriage is a vital part of life and like any other relationship has its ups and downs, elation and depression. Patience, willingness to sacrifice and tolerance, only will help to avoid friction. Whether one is rich or poor nobody has any monopoly on the cares and worries in life. Rich or poor should share alike all the experiences.

We are all struggling to find everlasting happiness. But it is a patent fact that separately we will not find it. Together we can not only have it but can give it to the future generations.

LASTING VALUES OF LIFE

What are the virtues and values of life ? The word virtue comes from the word 'vira'. Vira the Samksrita word stands for heroism. In ancient times the 'Vira' or the heroic person was regarded as the most virtuous man.

Likewise what is valuable in life ? We of the modern age are prone to measure the success of life with money, riches, powers and other material accumulations. For the true values of life are not those that can be measured in terms of money.

“ For what doth it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul ” ³⁸

“ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth which moth and dust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures of value where neither moth nor dust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal ” ³⁹

“ It is good to have money and the things that money can buy. But it is good too, to check up once in a while and make sure that you have not lost the things that money can't buy ” ⁴⁰

■

There is only one way to have a friend and that is to be one. So much so the only reward of virtue is virtue. The great theatre of virtue is conscience ” ⁴¹

“Heaven is not something else than virtue”⁴²

“With sweet words as the fruitful soil, with gifts as seeds, with harshness weeded out, manuring with truth, watering with affection, raise betimes the crop consisting of sheaves of virtue”⁴³

“The material characteristics of virtue are firmness in adversity, restraint in prosperity, eloquence in the assembly, boldness in war, the right desire of glory, study in the scriptures”⁴⁴

“Five things constitute perfect virtue; gravity, magnanimity, sincerity, earnestness and kindness”⁴⁵

“One thing we must be aware of when planning for posterity and it is that virtue is not hereditary”⁴⁶

“Virtue is a state of war and to live in it we have always to combat with ourselves”⁴⁷

“Of all the perfumes such as sandalwood, tagara, lotus, jasmine etc the perfume of virtue is by far the best”⁴⁸

“But virtues like perfumes or essences lose their fragrance when exposed: they are sensitive plants that will not bear the familiar approaches”⁴⁹

“ They alone succeed who early take hold of and practice virtue. It is not certain that he who lies down at night will wake up in the morning. Wherefore then do you begin early to do good ”⁵⁰

“ Degrees of happiness vary according to the degrees of virtue and consequently that life which is most virtuous is the most happy ”⁵¹

“ Virtue is that perfect good which is the complement of a happy life : the only immortal thing that belongs to mortality ”⁵²

“ There is no greater injury to one's character than practising virtue with motivation ”⁵³

But motivation is the crux around which the life of the modern man revolves. We have motives in every action and these motives are primarily selfish. We are so busy with these motives and personal gains that we have become indifferent to values, art, literature, music and the like. Material interests have smothered all values. But we don't show this outwardly. Hence we speak of sacrifice, service and what not? But in practice we commit the most heinous crimes. Our life is of dual standards and we are hypocrites to ourselves. Thus we may hoodwink others but we cannot hoodwink God or our conscience.

“ God reads the soul and not the face ;
He hears the thoughts and not the tongue,
In heaven the features wear no grace.
Save that which round the spirit hung ;
And only they are lovely seen
Whose lives on earth have noble been ”⁵⁴

“ Understand, however, that every man is worth just so much as the things are worth about which he busies himself. All things are implicated with one another, and the bond is holy ; and there is hardly anything unconnected with any other thing. For things have been coordinated and they combine to form the same universe. For there is one universe made up of all things and one God who provides all things, and one substance and one law, one common reason in all intelligent animals and one truth ”⁵⁵

When you seek happiness in material things you are trying to appease yourself with the froth of life. How can a man learn to know himself by accumulating material things ? In the measure in which thou seekest to do thy duty shall thou know what is in thee. For—

“ Die when we may, I want it said of me, by those who knew me best, that I always plucked a thistle and ‘planted a flower, where I thought a flower would grow ”⁵⁶

There is not a man or woman however poor they may be, but have in their power, by grace of God, to leave behind them the grandest thing on earth, character and honesty " 57

" Self sacrifice is the basis and essence of virtue, so those virtues are the most meritorious that have cost the greatest effort to attain " 58

But " When he has more than he can eat
To feed a stranger is not a feat
When he has more than he can spend
It isn't hard to give or lend.
Who gives but what he'll never miss
Will never know what giving is.
The poor widow's mite to heaven went
Because real sacrifice it meant " 59

Any amount of riches without contentment is of no use.

" Content to live, this is my stay ;
I seek no more than may suffice ;
I press to bear no haughty sway :
Look, what I lack my mind supplies :
• Lo, thus I triumph like a king,
Content with that my mind doth bring " 60

Things of lasting values are truth, love, kindness and contentment. To crown all these one must have the blessing of good health which is considered as the blessing of the rich and the riches of the poor. For who can enjoy life without health and who can buy it if not bestowed by God?



REFLECTION

Many people say that life is futile, boring as well as disgusting. Specially the people who strive for happiness in the sphere of material things are sooner or later disappointed with life and look at life with a certain amount of disbelief. But that is not the correct approach to life. Life has to be lived, there is no escape from it.

If we are eager and enterprising, if we are vigilant and care for values, "life is always opening new unexpected things to you. There is no monotony in living to him, who walks even the quietest and tamest path with open and perspective eyes. The monotony of life, if life is monotonous to you, is you, not the world " 61

"The web of life is a mingled yarn, good and evil together: our virtues would be proud if our faults whipped them not, and our crimes would despair if they are not cherished by our virtues " 62

"The one prudence in life is concentration. The one evil is dissipation and it makes no difference whether our dissipations are coarse or fine " 63

"Therefore the earnestness and liveliness of life is the only passport to the satisfaction of life " 64

Therefore “ if I would get the ear of every youngman but for one word it would be this : make the most and best of yourself ” ⁶⁵

We all have to work in different spheres and capacities to eke out a living. While doing so most of us try to feed our personality on activities which have no organic relations with ourselves. One is in a profession when he ought to be a professor; another may be in a profession, in politics, in literature or any other branch when he ought to be consecrated to the salvage of culture, may be through these very activities. At any rate we tend to measure the success and purpose of life by the yardstick of material possessions or success.

How many of us have a definite and divine purpose of life? How many of us have the readiness to become but an instrument for achieving that purpose ?

We must realise that life is not long: and our capacities are not large. We tread the path of death when we seek to pursue all the paths that appear open !

Our aims, our friends, our interests are those of dilettante. They do not look one way, i.e., we have not that concentration or ‘ekagrathe’ as they should, if we were but His instruments.

When looking at life we must be objective. We must realise the significance of every phase of life. The past is not all good and great, much less is it the final peak of all greatness, goodness and wisdom. The golden age of life and history are not all laid up in the past; and modernity is not a continuous fall from the good, a decay and deterioration. The modern age is in many respects far greater than the past.

Nevertheless there are some essential values of life, some supreme truths which do not grow old and fade with the passing of time but are always valid, perennial and timeless. These essential values, the great masters of the past saw with greater clarity: and here, they have permanent lessons, an even redemptive gospel, for the modern age, which tends to forget them too often in its blind astonishment at the material success of Physical Sciences.

Sometimes we think that happiness can be found in the pursuit of thrills, but only the things that are eternally and fundamentally right, create and prolong the thrills of life; those that are wrong limit and destroy the pleasures of living. Repetition of any stimulus finally ceases to give pleasure and boredom and positive pain occur. But the perennial, eternal values do not become stale.

Take for instance the gospel of Buddha. His message of Dharma (comprising Dhyana, Sheela and Maitri) though two millennia old as human history goes is as modern, as up-to-date or contemporary as Science itself, in its relevance and validity and much more healing, humanising, elevating and saving than science in all times.

Whether men and nations live a life of advanced modern technology in cities or a rustic simple life in villages, whatever their ambitions or talents, whatever their period in history—ancient or modern—these values or spiritual or life urges press incessantly and imperatively for man's devotion and practice. Very briefly these values are reason, love and good action—in other words right knowledge, feeling, and contact—Prajna, Maitri and Sheela.

The call of this trinity of intrinsic values is continuous, perennial. There can be no holidays for man from truth, good-

ness and beauty. To the extent to which they are violated, the progress of man is arrested and even his bare survival or existence is endangered. History takes a terrible toll from men and societies that stagnate in untruth, wickedness and ugliness—the immoral act, licentious morality, blind ignorance and superstition.

So the vedantic stream of Indian Culture has explored these values for ages, verified, developed and defined them in Philosophy, Aesthetics and Ethics—Tattva Shastra, Alankara Sastra and Dharma Shastra.

This trinity of values has been identified as ultimate, self-critical and self-rehabilitating in their integral unit. They are attributes of Divinity—Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram—The True, The Beautiful and The Good viz Sat-Chit-Ananda.

IN QUEST OF HAPPINESS

Now Children,

Every one without exception thinks that the sole aim of life is to be happy. Each one in his own way tries to attain this much sought happiness. When one is a mere child he or she wants to be a happy child. When he or she becomes a young man or woman he or she wants to be happy and when he or she attains old age then also he or she wants to be happy. Whatever may be the station of our life, wherever we may have been placed, the inner urge of every human being is to be happy. But are they happy? Are you happy? If not, why don't you?

If I say that you can be happy, you ask how? Now listen. As I said you can be happy!

We sometimes miss the great joys in life by snatching too eagerly at the false and glittering froth. We have no clear idea of things which bring lasting happiness. Happiness is not a thing of heaven or a thing which can be attained only after death. Happiness is very close at hand and we don't see it having been attracted by far away things. We can earn happiness!

Happiness is not an external thing. To find happiness we must search our own inner precincts. For happiness is a thing of inner self rather than a matter of external acquisition. In this search for happiness one must constantly remember—

“The secret of happiness is not in doing what one likes but in liking what one has to do”¹

Observe nature and you will find that each unit of nature has its special work to do and each performs its function to perfection in accordance with the laws of the universe. The shrub flowers beautifully, the tree stands magnificently, the fruit mellows deliciously, the bee works incessantly, the bird sings sweetly, etc. There is no competition between them. Each goes on its mission...naturally and in an orderly way. So also human beings have a distinct contribution to make. Therefore we must be what we are intended to be. We have to live as such, we have to grow according to the natural laws and have to give or contribute to the universal law what we ought to give as human beings.

*“ If you can't be a pine on the top of the hill
Be a shrub in the valley—but be
The best little shrub by the side of the hill;
Be a bush if you can't be a tree ”²*

“ Happiness is where it is found and seldom where it is sought ”³

Some people have every reason to be happy but they insist on thinking that they are unhappy. Those who persist in feeling abused, even though they are very near to happiness, virtually close the door to happiness when they could easily enjoy its richness. Faith and belief are the foundations of happiness.

“ You will have to believe that winds will blow
Believe in the grass, the days of Summer ;
Ah, that is the reason the bird can sing ;
on the darkest day, he believes in spring” ⁴

“ Happiness is the mental state of contentment which comes from successful adaptation to the world as it really is. It comes from being useful, of contributing to the welfare and happiness of others ” ⁵

“ When a bit of sunshine hits ye
After passing a cloud,
When a bit of laughter gets ye
And ye're spine is feeling proud,
Don't forget to up and fling it,
At a soul that is feeling blue.
For the minit that ye sling it,
It is a boomerang for you ” ⁶

Why should we destroy the present happiness by a distant worry ? It may never come at all ? For every substantial grief has myraid shadows and most of them are of our own making ! ⁷

We must laugh away our blues. It is of no use to put a long face and down the shutters on cheerfulness. Cheerful disposition and a hearty laugh enhances happiness.

“ A laugh is just like music,
It lingers in the heart,
And when its melody is heard,
The ills of life depart ”⁸

WHAT IS HAPPINESS ?

Our great epic Ramayana enjoins the manifold paths of happiness and misery. Though some of these could not be borne out as gospel truths by modern standards, we will stand to gain by examining these critically.

Ramayana says that these six contribute to happiness viz. Sound health, Freedom from indebtedness, Not being away from home, Association with the virtuous, Doing a job after one's inclination and Living without fear.

It ordains that these six lead to misery, viz., Jealousy, Misplaced tender-heartedness, Lack of interest, Irritability, Being ever suspicious, and Living upon other's fortune.

Further it says that these seven lead to calamity, viz., Ill-bred women, Gambling, Hunting, Drinking, Harshness of speech, Severity of punishment and Misuse of wealth.

In order to ensure happiness it is pertinent that we shun the path of misery and calamity and follow the right path. We must be aware that the kind of happiness which is derived from position, importance, possession and respectability is only so called happiness but it is not the real happiness. When we do what is right and good we are bound to be happy.

Bear this in mind. The most beautiful art in the world is the art of creating happiness. It can be made out of so nearly nothing that it is well called creation. A bright face, a little sympathy and appreciation, a ready hand and encouraging voice—they send a fellow traveller on his way refreshed, strengthened and comforted. ⁹

As said before “ the object of life is to be happy, the place to be happy is here ; and the time to be happy is now, and the way to be happy is by making others happy ’ ¹⁰

“ It is a common delusion to imagine that if one possessed this or that—a little more money, a little more leisure, this man’s talent and that man’s opportunities—one would be happy with a perfect felicity. Alas ! discontent and misery lie in such vain wishes. If happiness is not already found within, it will never be found without. The happiness of a wise mind abides through all vicissitudes ” ¹¹

“ Before we can bring happiness to others we first must be happy ourselves, nor will happiness abide with us unless we confer it on others. If there be a smile on our lips, those around us will soon smile too, and our happiness will become truer and deeper as we see that the others are happy ” ¹²

“ Endeavouring to make the lives of others happy is one of the surest ways of securing happiness for ourselves. Read what Jesus said in his Sermon on the Mount.

Happy those are who know
They are spiritually poor
The Kingdom of heaven belongs to them !
Happy are those who mourn
God will comfort them !

Happy are the meek
They will receive what God has promised !
Happy are those whose greatest desire
Is to do what God requires
God will satisfy them fully !
Happy are those who show mercy to others
God will show mercy on them !
Happy are those pure in heart
They will see God !
Happy are those who work for peace among men
God will call them his Sons !
Happy are those who suffer persecution
Because they do what God requires ;
The Kingdom of heaven belongs to them !
Happy are you when men insult you,
and mistrust you and tell all kinds of evil lies
against you,
Because you are my followers !
Rejoice and be glad because a great reward
is kept for you in heaven !
This is how men treated the prophets
who lived before you ! ” ¹³

Listen my children

“ Happiness is neither within us nor without us. In essence it is the union of ourselves with God ” ¹⁴

“ No one can do a good deed without experiencing happiness. It should follow then that those who do the most good deeds are happiest and they are ” ¹⁵

“Happiness is a coy maiden and not easily wooed and won ; selfishly to pursue happiness is the surest way to miss it. But when men forget themselves for the welfare of others, they suddenly find themselves in the land of happiness ” 16

“ True happiness has no localities ;
No tones provincial, no peculiar garb ;
Where duty goes, she goes. with justice goes,
And goes with meekness charity and love ” 17

Happiness has to be earned

“ The delights of thought, of truth, of work, of well-being will not descend upon us like the dew upon the flower without effort of our own. Labour, watchfulness, perseverance, self-denial, fortitude are the elements out of which this joy or happiness is formed ” 18

“ Few things are needed to make a wise man happy but nothing satisfies the fool, and this is the reason why so many of mankind are miserable and devoid of happiness ” 19

“ Half the world is on wrong scent in pursuit of happiness, they think it consists in having and getting and being served by others. It consists of giving and serving others ” 20

“ It is worthy of special remark that when we are not too anxious about happiness or unhappiness but devote our-

selves to the strict and unsparing performance of duty, then happiness comes off itself. I am more and more convinced that our happiness or unhappiness depends for more on the way we meet the events of life than on the nature of those events themselves " 21

"He who makes happiness his chief objective of life is bound to fail. Happiness is a by-product not an end in itself " 22

"A happy life must to a great extent be a quiet life, for it is only in the atmosphere of quiet that true joy can live " 23

"Happiness at least is not solitary ; it joys to communicate, it loves others, for it depends on them for its existence. A happy man is not demonstrative or loquacious. The very name and appearance of a happy man breathes of good nature and help the rest of us to live " 24

AVENUES OF HAPPINESS-THOUGHT

It is very essential to control our thoughts. Because our thoughts control our actions. We should be careful to see that our thoughts are good, clean and gracious. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he" says the Bible. It is the mind—the thought centre in us which can make a heaven of hell or a hell of heaven. So it is very important that we harbour and impart good thoughts.

“If instead of a gem, a flower or a costly present, we could cast the gift of a lovely thought into the heart of a friend that would be giving as angels must give”²⁵ *For it is said that “No benefactor is equal to him who peoples life with new and lofty thoughts”*²⁶ *Hence it is rightly pleaded that, “Men should be judged not by the kind of skill, the God they serve, the vintage they drink, nor by the way they fight, love or die but by the quality of thoughts they think”*²⁷

*If you objectively search, you will find that “the happiest people in the world are those that have the most interesting thoughts because man lives in deeds not in years; in thoughts not in breaths, in feelings not in figures on the dial, we should count time by heart throbs. He most lives who thinks most, feels noblest, acts the best”*²⁸ ,

“Then let your secret thoughts be fair ;
They have a vital part and share

In shaping words and moulding fate,
God's system is so intricate " 29

" If only one wished to be happy and thinks himself happy, happiness could be easily accomplished but we wish to be happier than other people and this is always difficult, for we believe others to be happier than they are " 30

" No man is happy who does not think himself so " 31

" We can have the highest happiness by having wise thoughts and much feeling for the rest of the world " 32

Therefore " to be happy you must forget yourself, learn benevolence, learn to harbour good thoughts, it is the only cure for morbid temper " 33

The truth of the importance of thoughts in ensuring happiness is not the modern idea of any religion or psychology. It is the foundation of life and was laid down for us along with other truths in the upanishads. "Yadbhavam Tadbhavati" (As you think so you will be) is a recognised Truth.

" All conduct is made and moulded by thoughts. All deeds good or bad are thoughts made visible " 34

“ All that we are, is the result of what we have thought : it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him like a shadow that never leaves him ” ³⁵

“ As long as you can say what you think and not what some other person has thought for you, you are on the right way to being a remarkable man ” ³⁶

Hence “ to roam about in the garden of world’s best thoughts will be our diligent study; to digest them will be our constant endeavour; and to eliminate the contradictions will be our un-failing creed. To develop an universal attitude by synthesising the peculiarities will be our objective ” ³⁷

“ Our manners will depend very much upon the quality of what we frequently think on; for the soul is as it were tinged with the colour and complexion of our thought ” ³⁸

Before long, alas ! this body will be on the earth ; dis-
pised-without understanding, like a useless log ; yet our
thoughts will endure. They will be thought again and will
produce action. Good thoughts will produce good actions
and bad thoughts will produce bad actions ” ^{38a}.

“ Every wrong we think or do makes the world meaner. Every good we think or do makes the world richer and happier. We can be masters of our thoughts. If we think good we need fear no evil ” ³⁹

“ What you call the atmosphere of your home or office is not dependent upon its building material or its furnishings, The atmosphere is a register of quality of thoughts of those who dwell there. It will be harmonious in the measure that courtesy, goodwill, good temper and kindness are permitted to rule the minds of the residents or occupants ” ⁴⁰

“ Thought pure and simple is nearest to God as we get, it is through that we are linked with God ” ⁴¹

“ They never are alone who are accompanied by noble thoughts ” ⁴²

Hence, garner up pleasant thoughts in your mind, for pleasant thoughts make pleasant lives ” ⁴³

Virtually “ Thought means life. Since those who do not think do not live in any high or real sense. Thinking makes the man ” ⁴⁴

AVENUES OF HAPPINESS-HOPE

To be happy one must have an ideal to live. A man without an ideal or a purpose in life is like a rudderless boat. We must live for something. The higher the ideal, nobler will be our life. Happiness of the highest order can be attained only on the ideal of virtue and most of necessity must have truth for its foundation.

*Optimism and hope are living virtues. "People who look forward into the future expecting to see great things are people who are going to be happy"*⁴⁵

*"Hope is a good word. Without hope we shall never reach the things that give life its true happiness"*⁴⁶

*"Great things are never done, even small successes are never achieved, where there is no hope. Not to hope is not to live"*⁴⁷

*"Know then, whatever cheerful and serene supports the mind, supports the body too. Hence, the most vital movement mortals feel is hope; the balm and life blood of the soul"*⁴⁸

"When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you, till it seems as if you cannot hold on a moment

longer, never give up hope, for that is the place and time the tide will turn ” 49

“ It is necessary to hope though hope should always be deluded ; for hope itself is happiness and its frustrations, however frequent are yet less dreadful than its extinction ” 50

“ Man is, properly speaking, based on hope, he has no possession but hope ; the world of his is emphatically the place of hope ” 51

“ Hope is generally a wrong guide, but it is very good company by the way ” 52

“ The natural flights of the human mind are not from pleasure to pleasure but from hope to hope ” 53

Many of us suffer from misplaced craving for happiness. Everything should have a limit. But—

“ We squander health in search of wealth ;
We scheme and toil and save ;
Then squander wealth in search of health
And all we get is the grave ” 54

As Benjamin Franklin has said "There are two ways of being happy ; we may either diminish our wants or augment our means, either will do." But in whatever you do, be optimistic and hopeful—

“ When you think you are trouble hit
Laugh a little bit
Look misfortune in the face
Brave the Beldam’s rude grace
Ten to one ’twill yield its place
If you have the wit and grit
Just to laugh a little bit
Keep your face with sunshine lit
Laugh a little bit ⁵³



AVENUES OF HAPPINESS—WORK

The key to happiness rests in work. To be constantly employed and never asking "what shall I do?" is the secret of much goodness and happiness.

A fully engaged man is always happy. Yet there may be times when we bemoan the fact that light hearted joyousness of youth has left us. We blame our circumstances, environment and associates. Some of us go in search of which is gone. We should not let such a loss disturb us. Life is a process where things change continuously. We cannot stick on to one phase of life. We must take the changes as and when they come. We are the experiencers, the spectators, the creators of the process of life. We are outside the events and circumstances. Every change and circumstance vanish but we are what we are!

Hence play and be happy. Then back to work and be happy. We cannot be happy for long without work. Happiness consists in activity. Such is the constitution of our nature. It is a running stream and not a stagnant pool.

"Do you know why the work you accomplish fails either to give pleasure to yourself or others? It is because it is not cheerfully done and therefore appears discoloured" ⁵⁶

Bear in mind that "no work is worse than over work. In no work the mind preys on itself—the most unwholesome of food" ⁵⁷

“ There is work for all of us. And there is special work for each, work which I cannot do in a crowd or as one of a mass, but as one man acting singly according to my own gifts, and under a sense of my personal responsibilities I have a special work to do, as one individual, who by God’s plan and appointment have a separate position, separate responsibility and a separate work, a work which, if I do not do it, must be kept undone ” ⁵⁸

Such works are special, and exclusive for the concerned individuals. “ But, if you cannot work with love but only with distaste, it is better that you should leave your work and sit at the gate of the temple and take alms of those who work with joy ” ⁵⁹

“ There is no ‘worst worker’ or menial work as such in this world. Touch the proper chords—pride, incentive to produce—and men will prove themselves men, whatever their physique ” ⁶⁰

“ Simply to do what we ought is an altogether higher, divine, more potent, more creative thing than to write the grandest poem, paint the most beautiful picture, carve the mightiest statue, build the most worshipping temple, dream out the enchanting combination of melody and harmony prompted by motivation ” ⁶¹

“ No one needs sympathy because he has to work. Far and away the best price life offers is the chance to work hard and work worth doing ” ⁶²

“ He who entrusted with an errand should do it in such a manner that it is not in conflict with the previous ones and at the same time see that it serves some future purpose ” ⁶³

Chanakya has rightly said that work is greater than virtue. We have seen men talking of victory as it were something fortunate but they do not realise that work is victory.

“ To make some nook of God's creation a little fruitfuller, better, more worthy of God, to make some human hearts a little wiser, man-fuller, happier, more blessed, less accursed—it is work for God ” ⁶⁴

“ By all means pray. But when you have prayed go on with your work. God has no room for people who after they had an interview with Him, sit comfortably in the ante-room ” ⁶⁵

• “ Do your best and leave the rest
Firm endeavour stands the test
Rich rewards will come to him
Who works on with smiling vim ” ⁶⁶

We should believe in work, hard work and long hours of work. Men do not break down from over work but they do with worry and dissipation. The man who does not work for the love of work naturally feels the fatigue of work. The man who does not love his work but works only for money is not likely to make money nor to find much fun in life.

“There is no development physically or intellectually without effort. Effort means work. Work is not a curse. It is the prerogative of intelligence, the only means to manhood and the measure of civilization ” ⁶⁷

“Work is love made visible. Work is life in action. A man who has work that suits him, and a wife whom he loves, has squared his accounts with life ” ⁶⁸

AVENUES OF HAPPINESS—NATURE

One of the most satisfying and abiding experience in life is a deep appreciation of nature. If you want unfailing and lasting happiness, communion with Nature is the surest source. The so called happiness bestowed by wealth, health, friends, fame and other mundane things can be taken away from us but if we have a deep feeling for the mysterious working and the baffling beauty of nature we can still be happy.

“The touch of earth is always re-invigourating and the sure source of happiness to the son of the earth, even when he seeks a supra-physical knowledge. Supra-physical can only be reached if only we keep our feet firmly on the physical earth. Earth is His footing says the upanishad ”⁶⁹

Being misguided fools as we are, material interest callous our souls and prevents us from identifying ourselves with nature.

“In the region of nature, which is the region of diversity we grow by acquisition, in the spiritual world which is the region of unity, we grow by losing ourselves by unity ”⁷⁰

•

*There is no gain-saying the fact that “ Nature paints the best part of the picture, carves the best part of the statue, builds the best part of the house, speaks the best part of oration ”*⁷¹

We must reckon that “ Nature is the visible garment of God ”⁷² and as Gandhi said nature speaks through our instincts very clearly if only we listen to her. We all know the story of Haiwatha, “who learned of every bird its language, learned their names and all their secrets as to how they built their nests in summer, where they hid themselves in winter, talked with them whenever he met them, called them ‘ Haiwatha’s chickens.’ Of all the beasts he learned the languages, and their mode of life. How the beavers built their lodges, where the squirrels had their acorns, how the reindeer ran so swiftly, why the rabbit was so timid. Talked with them whenever he met them, called them “ Haiwatha’s Brothers ”⁷³

It is a scientific truth that the same life energy pulsates in everything. When a man suffers of injury the adjoining tree suffers with him. When a man thinks of harming a tree the tree records its horror before the man speaks about it.

This amply proves that “ there is no other easy door to knowledge and happiness than the door Nature opens: there is no truth and reality except the truths and realities we discover in nature ”⁷⁴

That is why St. Bernard says that “ what I know of the divine sciences and holy scriptures, I learnt in woods and fields. I have had no other masters than the beeches and the oaks ”

“ Hills and valley, seas and constellations are types of divine ideas appealing to and answered by the living soul of man ”⁷⁵

“ Natural objects themselves even when they make no claim to beauty, excite the feelings and occupy the imagination. Nature pleases, attracts, delights and makes us happy merely because it is Nature. We recognise in it an Infinite Power. There is no trifling with Nature, it is always true, grave and severe ; it is always in the right and the faults and errors fall to our share ” 76

Nature has the soothing effect, when we are depressed or sorrowful. “ My garden spade can heal ; a woodland walk, a quest of river grapes, a mocking thrush of a wild rose, a rock loving columbine, salve my worst wounds ” 77

Many a time our conceit, arrogance and vanity form stumbling stones preventing us from travelling the road to happiness. On such occasions we must remember the littleness of man in the universe and its constellations. Henry Kirk White rightly castigates—

“ Thou proud man, look upon your starry vault,
Survey the countless gems which richly stud
The night’s imperial charriot-telescopes
will show the myraids more innumeros
As the sea-sand-each of those little lumps
Is the great source of light, the Central Sun
Round which some other mighty sister-hood
Of planets travel-every planet stocked
With living beings important as thee.
Now proud man-now, where is thy greatness fled ?

What art thou in the scale of universe ?
Less, Less than nothing ! ”

We must always allow ourselves to respond to nature because—

One impulse from the vernal wood
will tell you more of man
of moral evil and of good
Thou all the sages can ” 78

Some people when they are dejected and sorrowful take to books. Books may give us some little solace, But generally, “Books ! it is a dull and endless strife ! ” Throw the books and

“ Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music, on my life,
The more of wisdom in it.
And hark how blithe the throstle sings !
He too is no mean preacher ;
Come forth into the light of things,
Let nature be your teacher ” 79

My Dear Children :

“ The Sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—Are not these, O Soul, the vision of Him who reigns ? Is not the vision He ? Tho’ he be not that which He seems ? 80

Ultimately bear in mind that a good reputation; a clear conscience; appreciation of nature; a peaceful heart; the knowledge of having given happiness to others; a trained and well-filled mind; satisfaction of duty well-done; faith in the outcome of right; contentment; well adjusted social relationships; good health; these make for true happiness.

REFLECTION

To be in complete happiness one must be necessarily in harmony with Nature and its laws. Happiness is not a reward of virtue but is virtue itself said Spinoza. Happiness is the most noble and by far the most important goal to be achieved. All of us when we do our duties naturally, contribute our mite to the sum total of happiness in the world. The musician gives his interpretation of deity in his music, the gardener plants seeds and helps them to put forth flowers and fruits, the artist interprets through colour, the poet weaves his version with words, the physician heals the afflicted. In a nut-shell all praise God in their own way ; the bird trilling its joy, the flower giving its perfume etc. The measure is not what we do nor how much we do, but how well we do it.

The great symphony ' Life ' composed of many parts is played in many moods with occasional solos on the one theme, played by many individuals in union, though some may be out of tune.

It is evident that part of happiness depends on the individual and part of it depends on society we live in. The part of the happiness which depends on an individual is a state of being and hence is to be conquered by persistent effort. A man who wants to be happy must cultivate rationality. Rationality can be outlined as scientific outlook or humanism. It is thinking of right thing at the right time and in right perspective. It is forming one's convictions on concrete evidence rather than on hear-say, blind faith or tradition.

Let me give below the tenets suggested by the National Religious press as basis for lasting happiness.

1. Live a simple life. Be temperate in your habits. Avoid self-seeking.
2. Spend less than you earn. Keep out of debt. Cultivate frugality, prudence, self-denial and at any cost avoid extravagance.
3. Think constructively. Train yourself to think accurately. Store your mind with good and useful thoughts. Stand poster at the door of your mind.
4. Cultivate a yielding disposition. Try to see the other man's view. Resist to want things your own way.
5. Be grateful. Begin the day with gratitude for your opportunities and blessings. Be glad for the privilege of life and work. Cultivate a mental attitude of good will and peace.
6. Give generously. There is no greater joy in life than render happiness to others by intelligent giving.
7. Be interested in others. In the degree that you give, serve and help will you experience the by-product of happiness.
8. Work with right motives. The highest purpose of life should be to grow in spiritual grace and power.
9. Live in a day-light compartment. Concentrate on your immediate task. Make the most of today, for it is all you have.

10. Have a hobby. Nature study, walking, gardening, music, books, social service, public speaking, travel, authorship are samples.

11. Keep close with God. True and enduring happiness depends on close alliance with Him.

Constantly bear in mind that you will not be able to put the above to practice unless you scrupulously follow the following three mandates.

- 1 Don't pretend to know what you don't know.
- 2 Don't hold hypothesis which cannot be tested.
- 3 Have the conviction-nothing human is alien to me.

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CHAPTER 3

THE FOUR SYNONYMS—BEAUTY, LOVE, GOD AND TRUTH

Beauty, Love, God and Truth seem to be four different words. But in essence they depict the only one central factor—the Reality. Before we reflect on these words of comprehensive meaning let us see what the great masters of language and seers of Truth have said about them.

BEAUTY

“Beauty is the sensible image of the infinite. Like truth, love and justice it lives within us ; Like virtue and the moral law it is a companion of the Soul ” ¹

“Severe temperance and purity, modesty and humility, a gracious bearing and calmness of spirit, the signatures of these graces in the countenance are the true marks of Beauty ” ²

“The criterion of true beauty is that it increases on examination, if falls, to that extent beauty lessons ” ³

“Beauty of form affects the mind, but then it must not be the mere shell that we admire, but the thought that this shell is only the beautiful case adjusted to the shape and value of a still more beautiful pearl within ” ⁴

“ O beauty find thyself in Love and Truth, not in the flattery of the mirror ” ⁵

“ Beauty is no quality in things themselves it merely exists in the mind which contemplates them and each mind perceives a different beauty according to its own width and depth ” ⁶

“ A spot of beauty is no place for social enjoyment, or self-indulgence ; it is the place for self-restraint ; for solitary meditation, which leads the mind from nature upto nature’s God ” ⁷

“ The most beautiful thing we experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all art and science ” ⁸

“ Beauty is truth’s smile ; love’s repose and God’s benediction ” ⁹

“ If you get a simple beauty and nothing else, you get about the best thing that God invents ” ¹⁰

“ Youth is happy because it has the ability to see beauty. Anyone who keeps that beauty never grows old ” ¹¹

My Dear Children

A beautiful life is not a life of richness and comforts. The life of many of our rich men is anything but beautiful-ugly, morbid with passions and frustrated, because of ceaseless craving for pleasures.

No life is beautiful or happy until we learn to look upon it as a solemn burden which we have to bear cheerfully to reach the goal of self-fulfilment.

Beauty, truth, joy and love can never be divorced from one another. A thing of real beauty gives unfading joy; reflects eternal truth. Where there is no joy, no truth, there is no beauty.

An architect expresses beauty through stone; a poet through words; a man of culture through manners, a Bhaktha through emotions etc.

The hunger for beauty is a hunger for Truth. Beauty in words, in colours, in stone, in life, in character, in virtue has no transient limitations set up by different ages, races or countries.

The capacity to satisfy the hunger for beauty cannot be given by law or public opinion, or the votes of men, or ingenuity of artifice.

But the man or woman to whom the capacity is given has but one law—to enjoy beauty, to create beauty, and to impart to others such a vision of it as he can.

The tree, the cloud, the flower and the stream which give us this mysterious satisfaction are but magic symbols of the beauty that is within. It is there, real, insistent, undeniable. It is the true symbol of Reality.

LOVE

“The one faculty of the soul is sympathy or love. By the exercise of this faculty we transcend the boundaries of the isolated self. Through love you come into intimate touch with others. Through love you can enter what we term ‘The All’ ”¹²

• “If thou wouldst perfect thyself in knowledge, perfect thyself in love. If thou wouldst reach the Highest, ceaselessly cultivate a loving and compassionate heart ”¹³

“ Whatever thou lovest
That thou become must
God if thou lovest God
Dust if thou lovest dust ”¹⁴

“ Where love rules, there is no will to power ; and where power predominates, there love is lacking. The one is the shadow of the other ”¹⁵

“ The bayonet can enlist an army of conscripts but it is the silent eloquence of the flag that enrols the truly patriotic. Force writes her victories on sand but love records them on the heart, where neither life nor death effaces them ”¹⁶

“ Love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable ”¹⁷

“ Love which is the essence of God, is not for levity but for the total worth of man ” ¹⁸

Love feels no burden, thinks nothing of trouble, attempts what is above its strength, pleads no excuse of impossibility; for it thinks all things lawful for itself. ¹⁹

Love means renunciation of one's own self; of one's own standards. It is seeing with the other man's eyes, feeling with his heart and understanding with his mind. ²⁰

The heart of him who truly loves is a paradise on earth; he has God in himself for God is love. ²¹

Let grace and goodness be the principal loadstones of thy affections. For love which has ends will have end; whereas that which is founded on true virtues, will always continue. ²²

Love is an image of God, and not a lifeless image but a living essence of the divine which beams full of goodness. ²³

Love never reasons but profusely gives; gives like a thoughtless prodigal; it's all, and trembles then lest it has done too little. ²⁴

Love is like a beautiful flower which I may not touch but whose fragrance makes the garden a place of delight just the same. ²⁵

Love is the crowning grace of humanity, the holiest right of the soul, the golden link which binds us to duty and truth, the redeeming principle that chiefly reconciles the heart of life. and is prophetic of eternal good. ²⁶

He who does good, comes to the temple gate,
He who loves reaches the shrine ²⁷

To love is eternal, infinite, and always like itself. It is equal and pure, without violent demonstrations ; it is seen with grey hairs, and is always young in the heart. ²⁸

Loved will thou be?
Then love must first by thee be given
No purchase money else awaits beneath the heavens. ²⁹

All love is sweet, given or returned
Common as light is love,
And its familiar voice wearies not ever. ³⁰

To love through instinct is to love as an animal ;
To love according to inclination is to love as a man ;
To love against inclination is to love as a Saint ;

For only God can enable us to love one who does not
please us ;
Still more, one who displeases us, who grieves and
offends us. ³¹

To embrace the whole creation with love sounds beautiful but we must begin with the individual, the nearest. ³²

Better do without food than without love, for it being affection, sympathy, good feeling, unselfishness, is the atmosphere of life. ³³

Have love not alone for one,
But man as man thy brother call,
And scatter like the circling sun
Thy charities on all. ³⁴

Dear Children

“It is the mother who is capable of pure love. The love of a mother is never exhausted ; it never changes, it never tires. A father may turn his back on his child, brothers and sisters may become inveterate enemies, husbands may desert their wives, wives their husbands, but a mother’s love endures through all, in good repute, in bad repute, in the face of world’s condemnation, a mother still loves on. ³⁵

Love is kind and suffers long ;
Love is meek and thinks no wrong ;
Love itself than death more strong ;
Therefore give us Love. ³⁶

The heart is not a treasury which is impoverished by giving ; but a power which is strengthened and enriched by loving. ³⁷

Would you be a pilgrim on the road of love ? The first condition is that you make yourself humble as dust and ashes. ³⁸

He who comes to do good knocks at the gate ; he who loves finds the door open. ³⁹

Love indeed is light from heaven,
A spark of that immortal fire. ⁴⁰

Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing more courageous, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller or better in heaven and earth, because love is born of God and cannot rest but in God. ⁴¹

A good deed is never lost ; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love. ⁴²

Love seeketh not itself to please
Nor for itself has any case
But for another gives its ease
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.⁴³

What we can do for another is the test of power ; what we can suffer for is the test of love.⁴⁴

The night has thousand eyes,
And the day but one ;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the setting sun ;
The mind has a thousand eyes
And the heart but one ;
Yet the light of the whole life dies
When love is done.⁴⁵

Love will not envy but suffer, it does not want anything but is kind, it will never be elated nor is it puffed up. It will not seek its own, is not easily provoked. It does not think evil nor does it rejoice in other's fall, it rejoices in truth, bears every adversity, believes implicitly; hopes endlessly, endures limitlessly because love never fails.

Love is the height of man's mental and spiritual emotions. Love is natural and that is why parents love their children, and children love their parents. It is love that binds man and woman culminating in marriage-civilizations' highest sacrament.

Give the world the best that you have, and the best will come to you. There is but one humanity. All are inter-related. Aiding a fellow man is aiding a small division of one's own larger spiritual self. Never forget this—A selfish heart desires love for itself—a divine heart delights to love without expecting any return.

GOD

To approach a mighty king a man must ingratiate himself with the officials who keep the gates and guard the throne. So to reach the Lord Almighty and to obtain His grace one must practice much devotion. serve many devotees and keep for long the company of the wise. ⁴⁶

The first and the surest means to enter into communion with the Divine (God) is by sincerity. If you pray with sincerity, you will surely feel the divine presence. ⁴⁷

Whoever it was who searched the heavens with the telescope and found no God, would not have found the human mind if he had searched the brain with a microscope. ⁴⁸

He ceases to argue about God who has found God within him. Relying upon that calm strength, which is not the strength of self, he lives God, manifesting in his daily life the highest goodness which is Eternal Life. ⁴⁹

What is God after all? An eternal child playing an eternal game in an eternal garden. ⁵⁰

God is smaller than the atom and bigger than the Himalayas. He is contained even in the drop of the ocean

and yet not even the seven seas can compass Him. Reason is powerless to know Him. He is beyond the reach or grasp of reason. ⁵¹

God is the secret and the central light that kindles up the Sun, his dazzling representative and he lives, enlightens and comforts in the diffusion of his beams. His spirit inspires and actuates the air, and in it a breadth of life to all His creatures. He blooms in the blossom, and unfolds in the rose. He is fragrance in the flowers and flavour in the fruits. He coos in the turtle and bleats in the lamb, and through the paps of the stern bear and implacable tigress He yields forth the milk of loving kindness to their little ones. ⁵²

God lives in this world. He is the world soul. All things are but his garment, that ever-changing dress, that through death is ever-young. It changes and is in itself nothing, therefore the East has called it Maya—an illusion, because of its want of permanence. What lives is life, that makes the garment for itself to wear in fashions changing towards a far-off, dreamed perfection. But the life is God and God is love—unchangeable or ever in this world. ⁵³

Reality (God) is a dome of many coloured glass, and from our own little corner each of us sees a different combination of colours in the Kaleidoscope. ⁵⁴

God is not gained by weighing the feeble arguments of reason for or against His Existence. He is to be gained by a self transcending and absolute consecration, aspiration and experience. ⁵⁵

God is not a person. He is the all prevailing powerful spirit. Any one who bears Him in his or her heart has accession of marvellous force or energy as objective as its results as say Electricity but much subtler. ⁵⁶

A man who has stumbled down has to get up taking support from the same earth. Even so the Lord is the only support for one who has offended against Him. ⁵⁷

Measure not with words the immeasurable
Nor sink the sting of thought into the fathomless
Who asks doth err ; who answers errs—Say naught. ⁵⁸

God can only be found in the soul of the man who works for others with true love in his heart. All the world's wisdom shall be revealed to him. This is the truth from the beginning of time and will go on to eternity. This is truth ; this is love, this is beauty, this is peace and this is true Divine Strength. ⁵⁹

The name of God is the oil in which the wick of the self is to be drenched and then ignited by the fire of God. ⁶⁰

Man can only describe God in his poor language. The power we call God defies description. Nor that power stand in need of any human effort to describe Him. It is man who requires the means whereby he can describe that power which is larger than the sky vaster than the ocean.⁶¹

God is necessary to us in order that we may exist, while we are necessary to Him in order that He may be manifold to Himself.⁶²

God is that indefinable something which we all feel but which we do not know. To me God is truth and love. God is ethics and morality. God is fearlessness. God is the source of light and life and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the athiest.⁶³

Neither life nor death is He,
 He neither goes out nor does He come in,
 Nor sleeps nor wakes, nor is satisfied,
 He is neither I nor you, neither one or two;
 For no sooner do I say He is one, I find us both,
 When I say they are two, I see we are one ;
 So rest content, O Dadu, to look to Him as He is ;
 In the deep of your heart, and give up wrestling
 With vain images and empty words.⁶⁴

First gain God and then gain wealth ; but do not try to do the contrary. If after acquiring spirituality you lead a worldly life, you will never lose your peace of mind.⁶⁵

Beware of the man whose God is in the skies,⁶⁶

By making money our God we dethrone God.⁶⁷

God is the greatest democrat the world knows, for he leaves us unfettered to make our own choice between good and evil.⁶⁸

To explain God after merely reading the scriptures is like explaining to another, the city of Banaras seeing it only in a map.⁶⁹

Even if man does find how to create life in a test-tube this is not going to overthrow God or His account. It would have to be created within the laws governing the universe and therefore still be under God's control.⁷⁰

I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is ever changing, ever dying, there is underlying all that change, a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates.⁷¹

Even if I turn the whole earth into paper and all the trees into pens, and the seven seas into ink-pots the greatness of the Lord cannot be fully described.⁷²

God is not a power residing in the clouds. God is an unseen power residing within us and nearer to us than the finger nails to the flesh.⁷³

A river goes dry when it is cut off from its source. So also do we when we are cut off from our original source in God.⁷⁴

We believe in God because everything around us testifies to His existence. I have never doubted the existence of God ; for even if my reason were incompetent to grasp Him still my inner feelings would convince me of His Reality. My temperament has always been in harmony with this feeling.⁷⁵

God has become man ; Man will become God again ; you cannot believe in God until you believe in yourself.⁷⁶

The Real is in your home within !
 Why wander you from forest to forest ?
 Go where you will, to Kashi or to Mathura
 You will not find Him, except in your soul within.⁷⁷

He who sees God as one and the same in all beings and things, unchanging and indistructible within the changing and the perishing, knows the Truth.⁷⁸

God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His

being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and Truth.^{78a}

God is a circle whose centre is everywhere and its circumference no where.⁷⁹

They that deny God destroy man's nobility; for clearly man is of kin to God by body; and if he be not of kin of God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature.⁸⁰

We give God the name of good; it is only by stretching it that becomes God.⁸¹

In prosperity God tries our gratitude
 In mediocrity our submission
 In darkness our faith
 Under temptation our steadfastness
 And at all times
 Our obedience and trust in Him⁸²

If God did not exist, it would be very necessary to invent Him⁸³

Man cannot make a worm; yet he will make Gods by the dozen⁸⁴

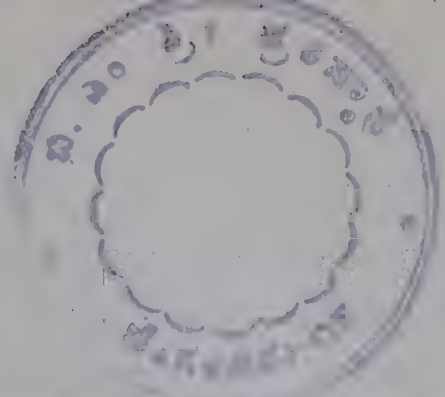
A foe to God was never a true friend to man.⁸⁵

I lived only when I believed in God. I had only to know God and I lived ; I had only to forget Him, not to believe in Him and I died. To know God and to live are one. God is life ! Live to seek God and life will not be without Him. ⁸⁶

Many dispute the existence of God. They dispute as though they know all the secrets of the universe. Many of us do not understand many of the scientific discoveries like electricity, wireless, telepathy, and the like. There are thousands of things which we do not know. Shall we refuse to accept them as truth? We have not seen the Himalayas or Greenland or the Midnight Sun. Shall we refuse to believe them ?

Man is a finite and infinitesimally incapable being to understand everything. His physical, mental and other powers work within limitations. It is given to each of us to know only a small part of knowledge to be gained in this universe. Each of us make our contribution to the whole of knowledge. Man has recognised that there is a power behind all these manifestations and called it God. It is not intelligent of athiests to refute this universal Truth and the testimony of the wisest men of ages.

If we only shed our arrogance of knowledge and open our eyes, ears and hearts to see, hear and record the great messages that are for us along our journey through life, we will learn to know the existence of that original power—the ultimate Reality.



TRUTH

Truth is a jewel which should not be painted over but it may be set to advantage and shown in a good light. ⁸⁷

The most practical and dignified way of going on in this world is to take people at their word, when you have no positive reason to the contrary. ⁸⁸

What has for centuries raised man above the beast is not the cudgel but an inward music; the irresistible power of unarmed Truth; the powerful attraction of its example. ⁸⁹

Long is the night to the watchman
Long is the league to the weary
Long is the round of births and deaths
To the fools that know not the truth
There is no Dharma greater than truth,
No Sin more heinous than untruth
No water holier than 'Theertha',
And no God greater than Truth.

Truth should be the first lesson of the child and the everlasting aspiration of man hood. ⁹¹

The Samskritha word for truth is “*Satya*”. Etymologically it is constituted of two halves, ‘*Sat*’ which connotes the material aspect earth, water and fire ‘*tya*’ which stands for ‘*Vayu*’ and ‘*Akash*’. That which is immanent in all these five elements is indicated by the word ‘*Satya*’. What is immanent in all the five elements but God? That is how God is equated with Truth.⁹²

Truth is what prays in man, and a man is continually a prayer when he lives according to truth.⁹³

The only significance of life consists in helping to establish the kingdom of God; and this can be done only by means of the acknowledgement and profession of truth by each one of us.⁹⁴

Truth is the only substantial thing in the world; is deeper than the deep ocean, and more eternal than the eternal Meru mountain.⁹⁵

In the natural scheme of things truthful men are endowed with a single tongue. Serpents with two; Ravana with ten; and the untruthful with a million tongues! what a distinction! ⁹⁶

Reverence to truth is a moral value. It is dearer than Buddha, Christ, Mohammed or any other prophets. ⁹⁷

Truth is unpalatable to most people, but deceitful falsehood is pleasant. Milk has to be taken from door to door to be sold, but toddy is sold on the spot. ⁹⁸

People laugh at what is unusual. And truth has now become unusual that we laugh at truth when we meet it. ⁹⁹

There is nothing like heaven or earth. Speaking truth is heaven and untruth is earth. ¹⁰⁰

As the boat is the only means of crossing a big river ; truth is the only ladder to heaven. ¹⁰¹

Every violation of truth is not only a sort of suicide in the liar but also a stab at the health of human society. ¹⁰²

Truth is one and eternal, but by reason of the natural limitations of the human mind, it is only discovered by us in parts. ¹⁰³

A truth that is told with bad intent
Beats all the lies you can invent. ¹⁰⁴

Truth is the secret of eloquence and of virtue, the basis of moral authority ; it is the highest summit of art and life. ¹⁰⁵

No pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth.¹⁰⁶

When all else fails, truth does not fail. When the heart is desolate and the world affords no shelter, truth provides a peaceful refuge and a quiet rest. The cares of life are many and its path is beset with difficulties but truth is greater than care, and is superior to all difficulties. Truth lightens our burdens; it lights up our path-way with the radiance of joy.¹⁰⁷

It is by the eradication of the inward errors and impurities alone that a knowledge of truth can be gained. There is no other way to wisdom and peace.¹⁰⁸

Say what is true and pleasant, do not say what is pleasant and not true, nor what is true and not pleasant.¹⁰⁹

If you tell the truth, you have infinite power supporting you; but if not you have infinite power against you.¹¹⁰

Truth never dies. The ages come and go,
The mountains wear away, the Stars retire.
Destruction lays earth's mighty cities low;
And empires, states and dynasties expire;
But caught and handed onward by the wise,
Truth never dies.¹¹¹

I stand for truth. Truth will never ally itself with falsehood. Even if the world should be against me, truth must prevail in the end.¹¹²

The strong traveller on the highroad of truth knows no such thing as resignation to evil; he knows only obedience to good.¹¹³

Truth is like a lighted lamp in that it cannot be hidden away in the darkness because it carries its own light.¹¹⁴

My dear children

You have a representative interpretation of truth from the great minds of the world. Truth is indefinable. It is the only reality in the universe, the inward harmony, the perfect justice the resplendent beauty, the eternal love. Nothing can be added to it, nor taken from it. It does not depend upon any man but all men depend upon it. You cannot perceive the beauty of truth while you are looking out from the eyes of the self. If you are vain, you will colour everything with your vanities; If lustful your heart and mind will be clouded with the smoke and flavour of passion and everything will appear distorted through the m. If proud and opinionated you will see nothing in the whole universe except the magnitude and importance of your own opinions. The humble truth lover has learnt to distinguish between opinion and truth.

Unity is the test of truth. Everything that makes for oneness is truth. Love is truth and hatred is fake, because hatred makes for multiplicity. It is a disintegrating power.¹¹⁵

As our scriptures proclaim—we are all sparks of truth. The sum total of the sparks is indescribable, as yet unknown truth—which is God. To be true to such conception one has to lose oneself in continuous and continuing service of all life. For me there is no escape from social service ; there is no happiness on earth beyond or apart from it. In this scheme there is nothing low, nothing high. For all is one though we seem to be many. That is the Eternal Truth.¹¹⁶

CHAPTER 4

MAN—THE PIVOT

Man, as a creation, represents more the creator and that is why, of all creatures, it has been possible for him to comprehend the world in his knowledge and in his feeling and in his imagination, to realise in his individual spirit a union with the spirit that is everywhere. ¹

The greatest object in the universe says a certain philosopher, is a good man struggling with adversity ; yet there is a still greater, which is the good man that comes to relieve it. ²

How amazing is the spirit of man ! In spite of innumerable failings man, throughout the ages, has sacrificed his life and all he held dear for an ideal, for truth, for faith, for country and honour. ³

What characterises man as a man is precisely the presence in him of abstract ideas, of moral ideas, of spiritual ideas and it is only of these that he can be proud. They are as real as his body and confer to his body a value and an importance which it would be for from possessing without them. ⁴

A man's behaviour proclaims his birth, his physique his food, his speech his learning, his eyes-his friendship. ⁵

He is the real man (Maha-purusha) who is dumb in censuring others ; born blind in looking at other women, and a cripple in grabbing other men's money-victory to him. ⁶

The lowest type of men fear unemployment, middlings fear death but the noble souls fear disrespect. ⁷

Men of God are assuredly the salt of the earth, they preserve the order of the world ; and society is held together as long as the salt is uncorrupted. ⁸

There are only two-kinds of men the righteous who believe themselves sinners, the rest sinners who believe themselves righteous. ⁹

He who acts wickedly in private life, can never be expected to show himself noble in public contact. He that is base at home will not acquit himself with honour abroad ; for it is not the man but only the place that is changed. ¹⁰

A man's nature is best perceived in privateness, for there is no affectation ; in passion for that putteth a man out of his precept ; and in a new case or experiment for these, custom leaveth him. ¹¹

Man is higher than all animals and angels. None is greater than man. Man alone attains to perfection, not even the Devas. Man is man so long as he is struggling to rise above nature. It is grand and good to know the laws that govern the stars and planets but it is infinitely grander and better to know the laws that govern the passions, the feelings, the will of mankind. ¹²

Man when perfected is the best of animals but when separated from law and justice, he is the worst of ail. ¹³

It is futile for man to search for the author of evil, for evil is in him only. There is no evil as such but the evil he does or the evil he suffers, both come from himself. ¹⁴

Does man differs from the other animals? Only in posture. The rest are bent but he is the only beast who waiks upright and needs to be upright. ¹⁵

Dear Children

Man is an animal which has risen upward by its own nobilities. But this is not the universal truth. Though many are men in features and shape, the animal propensity still lingers in us. Hear what the poet Subramanya Bharati had to say.

“ Is he not a *jackal* who ekes his livelihood by fraudulent and sleight of hand means ? ”

That man is a *lemur* who feels forlorn and keeps his head buried ostrich-like.

That man is a *serpent* who harms others incognito.

That man is a *pig* who wallows in cheap pleasures discarding virtue and fame.

That man is a *dog* who without self-respect hangs by the coat of others and lives on the cast-off crumbs of bread.

That man is a *parrot* who chants repeatedly the scripture without learning new and great things by means of his courage and intellect.

That man is a *donkey* who bears sluggishly the insulting treatment meted to him without opposing the oppressor.

That man is a *turkey* who is a window dressing dandy.

That man a *vulture* who fattens on others wealth without exerting himself.

That man is a light-shunning *owl* who gets disgust instead of curiosity when a new truth is trotted out.

That man is a *hound* who gets hot for all and sundry things ¹⁶

It is very important that being human beings we should live as men. Man is no weak worm of the dust but the highest expression of God in this material world. His latent powers are dimly realised and the God-power at his disposal but little developed. ¹⁷

Man is destined for mastery ; not the mastery of his fellowmen by force but the mastery of his own nature by self control. The mastery of his fellowmen by force is the crown of egotism but the mastery of self by self control is the crown of humility ¹⁸

•

No man should be judged by his defects ; the great virtues a man has are his, but his errors are the common weaknesses of humanity and should never be counted in estimating his character. ¹⁹

Four things a man must learn to do
If he would make his record true ;
To think without confusion clearly ;
To love his fellow men sincerely ;
To act with honest motive purely ;
To trust in God and heaven securely.²⁰

Children,

We have seen the various thoughts of great men regarding man. We must bear in mind, no success however eminent, no riches however unlimited, no achievement however applauded can make us better, nobler, more in tune with ourselves than the building of our personality through the process of integration. We must develop our personality in the midst of life, not away from it.

Personality is to man what perfume is to a flower. An integrated personality is the outcome of sorrow and self-discipline of efforts which have failed and ambitions which have been shattered. The noblest in us comes to the surface only when we are face to face with death, solemn and awe-inspiring.

Unfortunately most of us try to develop our personality from without rather than from within. Some of us dress our hair, others study and modify their voice, manner, appearance. Yet others acquire equipment physical or mental; all with the object of being something more notable and effective. But personality is not the result of possessions, it is the outcome of a man becoming more of a person than others, in being the source of inner power.

We view a man's life as patched-up pieces joined together as in a cinema flm. We reproduce the things he did, said or wrote but we do not study his personality. But personality is the expression in a limited space of time, of all the life forces and dominant ideas in the man which are largely created by the culture which is rushing forward at every moment through time.

MAN'S AMBITIONS

(1) TO BE RICH

Who does not want to be wealthy and rich? The desire to become rich quickly and to be happy all through one's life seems to be the main struggle of every one. Unfortunately it is an unfathomable mystery that in the pursuit to become rich every one ends up in dejection and frustration. We find people who have amassed wealth suffer for want of mental peace and happiness. Why? This is because they do not know what real wealth is!

There is an illuminating conversation between Shri Krishna and his devoted friend and servant Uddhava, which is a nectar-rean advice given to the world on the eve of Krishna's departure from the arena. The book which contains this is known as the Uddhava Gita.

In this Lord Krtshna declared that the virtuous man is the richest man and that we have to come out of our foolishness of thinking that our physical body is our 'self' itself. The human body is a home where God dwells and one has to be the master of the senses to overcome meanness. Non-attachment to sense objects makes a man lordly and rich.

The Lord says that it is not for us to distinguish between defects, merits and demerits. We must reach a stage which is beyond merits and demerits. Don't be discontented for discontentment is nothing but poverty. With the wealth of goodness and equanimity one must become rich in virtues. For he is indeed called rich who is rich in virtues.

Think over the thoughts of some of the great savants.

“I don't pity the unfortunate poor who are in need of charity. I can help them. My heart goes out to the presumably rich who are not charitable. No body can help them.”²¹

The rich man can provide himself no finer quality of sun light than is vouchsafed to the poor.²²

Wordly wealth is the devil's bait; and those whose minds feed upon riches, recede in general from real happiness in proportion as their wealth increase.²³

Money never made a man happy nor a man can be happy without it. Better is little with the fear of God than great treasure and trouble therewith. ²⁴

When money represents so many things, not to love it would be to love nearly nothing. To forget true needs can be only a weak moderation but to know the exact value of money and to sacrifice it for good causes is real virtue. ²⁵

Those who obtain riches by labour, care and watching know their value. Those who impart them to sustain and extend knowledge, virtue and religion know their use. Those who lose them by accident or fraud know their vanity. And those who experience the difficulties and dangers of preserving them know their perplexities. ²⁶

It is not money as is sometimes said, but the love of money-the excessive, selfish, covetous love of money that is the root of all evil. ²⁷

When I had money everyone called me brother says a Polish proverb. Money is honey. A rich man's jokes are always funny says T. E. Brown and Benjamin Franklin says that if you would know the value of money, better to go and try to borrow some and Voltatre opines that when it is a question of money everybody is of the same religion. But man cannot afford to waste his time entirely by making money. If we want to know what God thinks of money, look at the people he gives it to, says an adage.

Riches or money is not the be all and end all of life. Money has its value and place. To lose money ill is indeed in the nature of a crime, but to get it ill is a worse one and to spend it ill is worst of all. ²⁸

If we command our wealth we shall be rich and free ; if our wealth commands us we are poor indeed. ²⁹

We have heard and are hearing men making counterfeit money ; in many cases money makes counterfeit men. ³⁰

Charity, enjoyment and destruction are the three courses by which wealth passes way. He who neither gives nor enjoys invites only the third course. ³¹

Money is a good servant but a very bad master. If you make money your God it will plague you like the devil. ³²

Wealth to be of real worth, we should get it justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully and leave contentedly. ³³

Be content with what you have and if the horn of plenty overflows, let its droppings fall upon your fellow men. ³⁴

The greatest humbug in the world is the idea that money can make man happy. I never had any satisfaction with mine until I began to do good with it. ³⁵

Our incomes should be like our shoes; if too small they will gall and pinch us, but if too large they will cause us to stumble and to trip. But wealth after all is a relative thing. Since he that has little and wants less is richer than he that has much and wants more. ³⁶

The way to wealth is plain as the way to the market. It depends chiefly on two wards: Industry and frugality; that is waste neither time nor money but make the best use of both. Without industry and frugality nothing will do; with them every-thing. ³⁷

Wealth should be earned, continued to be saved too. It should be allowed to grow. If consumed without growth, even the Meru mountain will wear away. ³⁸

Love of riches and gold is said to be the meanest of amours. It is true that every door barred with gold opens but to golden keys. Riches and gold can do wonders, they will force the obstinate to service and compliance, they will conquer aversion and prejudice and the world is a slave to their glitter. The love of women—that perishable article of commerce—will be ever at their command. When money speaks the tongue has no force. And yet they are not all. Riches are not an end of life. They can only be instruments of life. To know how to dispense with wealth is to possess it. Hence don't make gold or wealth your object of life. Wealth is necessary for life but there are higher things in life which only can bring you happiness and peace.

(2) TO BE WISE

Children

Learning is not wisdom ; knowledge is not perception. Learned men may well be called the cisterns of knowledge but they are not the fountain heads of wisdom. Knowledge is always proud that he has learned so much but wisdom is humble that he knows no more. To be proud of knowledge is the greatest ignorance. The Italian proverb that from listening comes wisdom and from speaking repentance is hundred percent truth. As Socrates said wisdom is the one true currency in terms of which all things can be exchanged.

If you desire to be wise be wise as to hold your tongue.³⁹

Wisdom—real wisdom is more than knowledge. Knowledge is merely the accumulation of facts; wisdom is the interpretation of facts. Knowledge is culled from text books; wisdom is out of life. ⁴⁰

One gifted with eye-sight, although clad in tatters shines better than a blind man adorned with gold and jewels. ⁴¹

Brain is always to be bought; but wisdom never comes to the market. ⁴²

Wisdom is to the soul, what health is to the body. ⁴³

Wisdom is always nearer when we stoop than when we soar ⁴⁴.

Our chief wisdom consists in knowing our follies and faults, that we may correct them. ⁴⁵

Wisdom is more than understanding; happy is the man that findeth wisdom and the man that getteth understanding. ⁴⁶

The wisest man may be wiser today than he was yesterday and tomorrow than he is today. ⁴⁷

Perfect wisdom hath four parts viz., *Wisdom* : the principle of doing things aright; *Justice* : the principle of doing things equally in public and private; *Fortitude* ; the principle of not flying from danger but meeting it; and *Temperance* : the principle of subduing desires and living moderately. ⁴⁸

The unfailing wisdom is found only by constant practice in pure thinking and well doing by harmonising one's mind and heart to those things which are beautiful, lovable and true. ⁴⁹

There is this difference between happiness and wisdom; he that thinks himself the happiest man is really so, but he that thinks himself the wisest is usually the greatest fool. ⁵⁰

In truth alone lies wisdom. ⁵¹

Wise men read very sharply all your private history in your look and gait and behaviour. The face and eyes reveal what the spirit is doing, how old it is, what aims it has. ⁵²

If you have wit and wisdom, use it to please and guide and not to hurt; you may shine like the sun in the temperate zone without scorching. ⁵³

When you find a man worthy to talk to and fail to talk to him, you have missed your man. When you find a man unworthy to talk to and you talk to him you have missed (wasted) your words. A wise man neither misses his man nor misses his words.⁵⁴

To those that seek wealth, lust of gold cometh; to those that behold sinners, sin attaches itself; those that see a flower, enjoy its fragrance and those that see pious people acquire wisdom.⁵⁵

Wisdom and knowledge are not synonymous. They help each other but they are not same.⁵⁶

The effort to combine wisdom and power has only rarely successful and then only for a short time.⁵⁷

These are some of the guidelines to be wise. Outward show and pomp speak very little of the man. Such pompous men are always fools. Many pretend to be wise. But among them some are weather-wise and some are otherwise.

(3) TO BE GREAT

After amassing wealth and gaining knowledge man wants to earn fame. He wants to be considered as great. But how can one achieve greatness?

Sacrifices by the wealthy, forbearance by the mighty, courage in sorrow, unostentation in righteous conduct are said to be the hall marks of greatness.⁵⁸

Men who are truly great are like meteors. They shine and consume themselves that they may light the darkness of their time.⁵⁹

Dignity without pride was formerly characteristic of greatness ; the revolution in morals is completed and it is now only pride without dignity.⁶⁰

Greatness is usually the inheritance not of the dead but of the living. It is we who look back with lofty pride to the great names of antiquity, who drink of the flood of glory as of a river and refresh our wings in it for future flight.⁶¹

The man who gives himself without counting the cost, to everything he does, everything he suffers, everything that he loves, everything that he hates, he is a prodigy, the greatest that is granted to us on earth.⁶²

Greatness needs three things to be true-a man's brain, a woman's heart and a child's freshness of outlook.⁶³

Nothing is more simple than greatness ; indeed to be simple is to be great.⁶⁴

Truly great men of prowess and valour do not make a vain boast of their capacity. ⁶⁵

No great man ever complains of want of opportunity. ⁶⁶

Eleven of the twelve great men of history were only agents of a great cause. ⁶⁷

Man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellowmen. ⁶⁸

The great are great because we are on our knees. ⁶⁹

When anybody goes about on his hands and knees looking for a greatman to worship, he is making sure that one man at any rate shall not be great. ⁷⁰

Be not afraid of greatness: some are born great; some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them. ⁷¹

A really great man is known by three things—generosity in the design, humanity in the execution and moderation in success. ⁷²

There never was any heart truly great and gracious that was not also tender and compassionate. ⁷³

Great men are the commissioned guides of mankind, who rule their fellows because they are wiser. ⁷⁴

A great, a good and a right mind is a kind of divinity lodged in flesh and may be the blessing of a slave as well as of a prince. ⁷⁵

Greatness lies in not being strong, but in the right using of strength ; and strength is not used rightly when it serves only to carry a man above his fellows for his own solitary glory. He is the greatest whose strength carries up the most hearts by the attraction of his own. ⁷⁶

The greatest man is he who choses the right with invincible resolution, who resists the sorest temptations from within and without ; who bears the heaviest burdens cheerfully, who is calmest in storms and most fearless under menace and frowns ; and whose reliance on truth ; on virtue and on God is most unflinching. ⁷⁷

By becoming rich, by gaining wisdom, we try to be great. These and other objects compel us to climb higher. But these are all external appertinences, unless we have learned to conquer ourselves, our environment and our experiences we cannot distinguish ourselves.

To dare is great, to bear is greater, bravery we share
with brutes, fortitude with saints.⁷⁸

For all your days prepare,
And meet them each alike.
When you are the anvil-bear,
When you are the hammer-strike.⁷⁹

CHAPTER-5

A GARLAND OF ETERNAL FLOWERS

MIND

My dear children,

Hereunder I want to weave a garland of never fading flowers for you. I hope that you will love to wear it as a part and parcel of your life till life bids adieu once for all.

Before weaving the garland I must tell you about the thread that is the mind which holds this garland together.

There is nothing so elastic as the human mind. The more we are obliged to do, the more we are able to accomplish. ¹

God is mind; God is infinite. Hence all is, because of the mind. ²

Mind is the cause for the direction of all the senses leading to good and evil acts-³

Mind is the foundation of man. If that be sound the building not only stand but can weather all adverses ⁴

Minds are conquered not by the arms but by the greatness of the soul. ⁵

Great minds have purposes, others have wishes. Little minds are tamed and subdued by misfortune; but great minds rise above them.⁶

It is to him who masters our minds by the force of truth, and not to those who enslave them by violence that we owe our reverence.⁷

Not a mother, not a father will do so much nor any other relative; a well directed mind will do us greater service⁸

Habits always dull our sensitivity. We must be willing to accept the change in others, be willing also to change ourselves. Sensitivity demands the ability to have a serene mind, a mind that is not preoccupied with itself, a mind that is receptive, an open mind that is not always getting hurt at what it sees or perceives.⁹

A narrow stomach may be filled to its satisfaction but a narrow mind will never be satisfied, not even with all the riches of the world.¹⁰

The perfect man uses his mind as a mirror. It grasps nothing, it refuses nothing. It receives but does not keep.¹¹

The mind of man is like a clock and requires to be as constantly wound up.¹²

The true, strong and sound mind is the mind that can embrace equally great things and small. ¹³

It is extremely difficult to check and control the rapid rush of the mind but it can be done by regular and constant practice and by being dispassionate. ¹⁴

The mind grows narrow in proportion as the soul grows corrupt. ¹⁵

A mind all logic is like a knife all blade—it makes the hand bleed that uses it. ¹⁶

A mind rightly instituted in the school of philosophy acquires at once the stability of the Oak and the flexibility of the Osier. ¹⁷

What that which thinks, understands, wills and acts; it is something celestial and divine. ¹⁸

The mind is its own place and in itself,
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven. ¹⁹

MANNERS

Manners are an art, some are perfect and are commendable, some faulty, but there are none that are of no moment.²⁰

Manners are the ornaments of action and there is a way of speaking a kind word, or of doing a good thing, which greatly enhances the value.²¹

Throw a bone to a dog and it will run away with it in its mouth but with no vibration in its tail. Call the dog to you pat it on the head, let it take the bone from your hand and its tail will wag with gratitude. The dog recognises the good deed and the gracious manner of doing it. Those who throw their good deeds should not expect them to be caught with a thankful smile.²²

Good manners, as we call them are neither more or less than the good behaviour consisting of courtesy and kindness.²³

•

Manners must adorn knowledge and smoothen its way through the world.²⁴

Good manners are the blossom of good sense and good feeling.²⁵

Good manner costs nothing but buys everything. ²⁶

Good manners are a part of good morals and it is as much our duty as our interest to practice both. ²⁷

Your manners will depend very much upon the quality of what you frequently think on ; for the soul is tinged and coloured with the complexion of thought. ²⁸

Bad manners, dirtiness, jealousy, deceitfulness and tale-bearing are much more serious faults than ignorance of grammar or of geography. ²⁹

SPEECH

After our manners and behaviour comes speech.

Sages do not speak; the talented ones speak : and the stupid ones argue.³⁰

Whoever gives generously to a poor man has six blessings bestowed on him; but he who speaks a kind word to him has eleven blessings.³¹

Not the moon, not the cool water, not the sandal paste, nor even the cool shade gladdens man as much as, nice words sweetly spoken.³²

Birds are entangled by their feet and men by their tongues.³³

A sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use.³⁴

•

A slip of the feet you may soon recover, but a slip of the tongue you may never get over.³⁵

A tongue is but three inches long, yet it can kill a man six feet high.³⁶

Speech that causes no annoyance and which is truthful, loving and beneficial, the study and the recitation of the scriptures, these are declared to be austerities of the spoken word. ³⁷

Never speak in superlatives; for in so doing you will be likely to wound either truth or prudence. Exaggeration is neither truthful, wise nor safe. It is a proof of the weakness of the understanding or the want of discernment of him that utters it, so that even when he speaks the truth, he soon finds it is received with partial or even utter disbelief. ³⁸

Beware of your words while giving utterance to them by being uniformly graceful, for, one wrong word, might by hurting the other's feeling completely undo the wholesome effect created by all other right words put together. ³⁹

The necessity of saying something, the perplexity of having nothing to say, and the desire to be witty, are the circumstances which alone are capable of making even the greatest writer ridiculous. ⁴⁰

They blame him who talks much, they blame him who is silent, and they blame him who speaks little; there is not in fact, a person who is not blamed. Yet there never was, there never will be, nor is there now, a man who is always blamed or a man who is always praised. ⁴¹

Honey-coated words there are ever so many people to utter and they have a motive. But bitter truth though benevolent is rarely spoken much less listened by any. ⁴²

Nature has given us two ears, two eyes and but one tongue, to the end that we should hear and see more than we speak. ⁴³

There are things that ought to be considered before something is spoken the manner, the place and the time. ⁴⁴

In talking to people, do not begin by discussing the things on which you differ. Begin by emphasising and keep on emphasising the things on which you agree. ⁴⁵

Every drop of water goes to the making of the sea. In the same way every whisper, every conversation, every private talk, goes together to make the national life. ⁴⁶

Do not make the distinction between public speaking and private conversation. In private conversation we must observe the caution and the same sense of discipline as we do in public. ⁴⁷

Never rise to speak till you have something to say ; and when you have said it, cease. ⁴⁸

Think all you speak but speak not all you think.
Thoughts are your own ; your words are so no more. ⁴⁹

Speech is silvern, silence is golden ; speech is human,
silence is divine. ⁵⁰

Speak but little and well if you are to be esteemed as a
man of merit. ⁵¹

There are three things to aim at in public speaking ;
first to get into your subject ; then to get your subject into
yourself and lastly to get your subject into your hearers. ⁵²

A superior man is modest in his speech but exceeds in
actions. ⁵³

As a vessel is known by the sound, whether it is cracked
or not, so men are proved by their speeches whether they
are wise or foolish. ⁵⁴

While speaking we have double standards
We have careful thoughts for the stranger,
And smiles for the sometime guest.
But oft for our own,
The bitter tone !

Though we love our own best
Ah ! lips with the curve impatient
Ah ! brow with the look of scorn
' Twere a cruel fate
Were the night too late
To undo the damage done. ⁵⁵

While speaking bear the following in constant memory.

" If you are tempted to reveal
A tale to you some one has told
About another, make it pass,
Before you speak, three gates of gold ;

Three more gates, first ' Is it true ? '
Then, ' Is it needful ? ' In your mind
Give truthful answers. And the next
Is the last and the narrowest, ' Is it kind ? '

As if to reach your lips at last
It passes through that gateway three,
Then you may tell the tale, nor fear
What the result of speech may be " ⁵⁶

CHEERFULNESS

Dear Children,

Whether you speak, work, play or pray whatever you do, do it in a cheerful way. Pour forth all the colour, charm and cheer you have to your friends, to your home, to your daily society, to the poor and sorrowful, the joyous and the prosperous. Charm your surroundings with your cheer. Brighten darkened lives, soften the rude, make a sun shine of peace in stormy places, cover the faults and follies of men with the bright flowers of your cheerfulness. It brightens not only your surroundings but does a lot of good to you.

There is no physician like cheerful thought for dissipating the ills of our bodies. There is no comforts to compare with good will for dispersing the shadows of grief and sorrow. To think well of all, to be cheerful with all, to patiently learn to find the good in all—such unselfish thoughts are the very portals of heaven; and to dwell day by day in thoughts of peace, cheerfulness towards every creature will bring abounding peace and solace to the possessor.⁵⁷

You have not fulfilled every duty unless you have fulfilled that of being cheerful and pleasant.⁵⁸

Carry the sunshine with you into the sick room of your friend or any where you go and you will leave it there when you depart.⁵⁹

Cheerfulness leads to prosperity, cheerfulness is happiness. All actions done with cheer and enthusiasm lead to good results.⁶⁰

The most certain sign of wisdom is a continual cheerfulness. Her state is like that of things in the region above the moon, always clear and serene.⁶¹

The greatest religion of life is always to be cheerful.⁶²

What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity. They are but trifles to be sure, but scattered along life's pathway the good they do is inconceivable.⁶³

A cheerful temper joined with innocence will make beauty attractive, knowledge delightful and wit good natured. It will lighten sickness, poverty, and affliction, convert ignorance into an amiable simplicity and render deformity itself agreeable.⁶⁴

Wonderous is the strength of cheerfulness-and its power of endurance. The cheerful man will do more in the same time, will do it better, will preserve it longer than the sad and sullen.⁶⁵

The habit of looking on the best side of every event is worth more than a thousand pounds a year.⁶⁶

If good people would but make their goodness agreeable and smile instead of frowning in their virtue how many would they win to the good cause ? ⁶⁷

God is glorified not by our frowns but by our thanksgivings, and all good thought and good action claim a natural alliance with good cheer. ⁶⁸

Every time a man smiles and much more when he laughs, it adds something to his fragment of life. ⁶⁹

Cheerful looks make every dish a feast ; and it is that which crows a welcome. ⁷⁰

The cheerful live longest in years and afterwards in your regards. Cheerfulness is the offshoot of goodness. ⁷¹

I would rather have a fool to make me merry, than experience to make me sad. ⁷²

Cheerfulness is the consoler in solitude and passport and recommendation in society. You will be more sought after, more trusted and esteemed for your steady cheerfulness. ⁷³

Genuine cheerfulness is an almost certain index of a happy mind and a pure, good heart. ⁷⁴

Better is he who only shows a smiling countenance than he who offers milk to drink with a sad face. ⁷⁵

•

A beautiful smile is to the countenance what the sun beam is to the landscape ; it embellishes an inferior face and redeems an ugly one. ⁷⁶

A face that cannot smile can never be good. ⁷⁷

There are many kinds of smiles but cheerfulness is not the mark of every smile. Each smile has a distinct character. Some announce goodness and sweetness, others betray sarcasm, bitterness and pride, some soften the countenance by their languishing tenderness others brighten by their spiritual vivacity. ⁷⁸

By being pleasant and cheerful always and smiling it takes you nearer to God than any prayer. ⁷⁹

To those who cannot be cheerful and laugh, this big world is all darkness even during the day. ⁸⁰

•

I like the laughter that opens the lips and the heart that shows at the same time pearls and the soul. ⁸¹

It is a good thing to laugh and be cheerful at any rate, and if a straw would tickle a man, it is an instrument of

happiness. Beasts can weep when they suffer but they cannot laugh ; laughter is the exclusive privilege of man. ⁸²

Laughter is a most healthful exertion ; it is one of the greatest helps to digestion ; and the custom prevalent among our forefathers, kings and nobles of exciting it at table by jesters and baffoons was founded on true medical principles. ⁸³

The young man who has not wept is a sawage : and the old man who will not laugh is a fool. ⁸⁴

Always laugh and be cheerful when you can ; it is a cheap medicine. Merriment is a philosophy not well understood. It is the sunny side of existence. ⁸⁵

HUMOUR

Humour is the companion and basis of laughter and cheerfulness. Humour oils the wheels of life and helps to keep it running smoothly.

For health and constant enjoyment of life, give me a keen and ever present sense of humour ; it is the next best thing to an abiding faith in providence. ⁸⁶

True humour springs not more from the head than from the heart. It is not contempt ; its essence is love. It issues not in laughter but in still smiles, which lie far deeper. ⁸⁷

Wit may be a thing of pure imagination but humour involves sentiment and character. Humour is of general quality, dwells in the same character as pathos and is always mingled with sensibility. ⁸⁸

A clever person with no sense of humour is like a bucket without a handle, it holds things but you don't get much comfort out of it. ⁸⁹

If I had no sense of humour, I should long ago have committed suicide. ⁹⁰

The bark of humour often veers through shoals of smiles to seas of tears.⁹¹

Humour is the contemplation of the finite from the point of view of the infinite.⁹²

Good humour is one of the best articles of dress one can wear in society.⁹³

Humour should always lie under the check of reason and that it requires the direction of the nicest judgment.⁹⁴

These few quotations given above are the definition of humour from various angles. Hereunder I quote a few samples of good humour.

Some peoples' expenditure of speech is too great for their income of ideas.

It would be shocking if some men preached what they practice.

Shun idleness, it is the rust that attaches itself to the most brilliant metals.

It takes thirty-four muscles to frown and only thirteen to smile. Why make the extra effort ?

A woman's mind ought to be more cleaner than the man's because she changes it much oftener.

Some people practice economy only with truth.

More hardwork on the road and at crossings-less surgical work at hospitals.

There is always a penalty for exceeding the feed-limit.

Have you ever noticed that the knocker is always on the outside of the door ?

Running people down is a bad habit, whether you are a gossip or a motorist.

If you cannot make light of your troubles keep them dark. ⁹⁵

HUMILITY

Humility does not consist in hiding our talent and virtues, in thinking ourselves worse and more ordinary than we are, but in possessing a knowledge of all that is lacking in us and in not exalting ourselves for what we have. ⁹⁶

Humility is the root, mother, nurse, foundation and bed of all virtues. ⁹⁷

I believe that the first test of a truly great man is his humility. ⁹⁸

He who deems himself lowlier than even a blade of grass, is patient like a tree, craves not honour for himself, but is always eger to offer it to others—he alone is fit to chant the name of God. ⁹⁹

A humble person is not conscious of his humility. Inborn humility can never remain hidden and yet the possessor is unaware of its existence. ¹⁰⁰

It is only out of humility that there can be the flowering of wisdom, wisdom precludes an attitude of pride. ¹⁰¹

Sense shines with a double lustre when it is set in humility. An able and yet humble man is a jewel worth a kingdom. ¹⁰²

Acquire the art of detachment, the virtue of method and the quality of thoroughness but above all the grace of humility. ¹⁰⁸

We come nearer to the great when we are great in humility. ¹⁰⁴

Humility like darkness reveals the heavenly lights. ¹⁰⁵

If thou wouldst find much favour and peace with God and man, be very low in their own eyes. Forgive thyself little and others much. ¹⁰⁶

Humility which may be called the doctrine of grace, humbles man without degrading and exalts without inflating. ¹⁰⁷

Humility is the low sweet root from which all heavenly virtues shoot. ¹⁰⁸

A fault which humbles a man is of great use to him than a good which puffs him up. ¹⁰⁹

Nothing is so scandalous than a man that is proud of his humility. ¹¹⁰

PRAYER

Humility leads you to prayer. A man of prayer only can be a man of humility. Because prayer is the voice of faith. ¹¹¹

Prayer is the eye through which we see God. ¹¹²

Prayer is the recognition of the laws, the soul's exercise and source of strength. ¹¹³

Prayer is not asking. It is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without a heart. A heart-felt prayer is undoubtedly the most potent instrument that man possesses for overcoming cowardice and all other bad old habits. Because prayer is a confession of one's own unworthiness and weakness. ¹¹⁴

The key to paradise is prayer; and the key to prayer is purification. ¹¹⁵

God warms his hands at man's heart where the man prays. ¹¹⁶

Pray as everything depends on God and work as if everything depended on you. ¹¹⁷

By prayer is meant the practice of God's presence, the seeking of Him in our lives, the lifting up of our hearts and minds to Him. ¹¹⁸

Between the humble contrite heart and the majesty of heaven there are no barriers; the only pass word is prayer. ¹¹⁹

You can do more than pray after you have prayed but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed. ¹²⁰

The first and surest means to enter into communion with the divine is by sincerity. If you pray with sincerity you will surely feel the divine presence. ¹²¹

Prayer carries us half way to God. Fasting brings us to the door of His palace and alms-giving procures us admission ¹²²

Prayer is the highest energy of which the mind is capable. ¹²³

Let no one ask what is prayer and who is God. Both prayer and belief in God are supremely acts of faith. ¹²⁴

Purity is the best pilgrimage and the best prayer is the healing of a broken heart. ¹²⁵

Praying is an impossibility without a living faith in the presence of God within. A heart-felt prayer is not a recitation with the lips, it should be an yearning from within—in word, act and thought. There is no such thing as retreat for a man of prayer.¹²⁶

The person who prays before images, offers sacrifices, oblations oblivious of Me, seated in all the creatures as the inmost self does so through stupidity offering them to ashes.¹²⁷

Prayer should give one strength to resist; patience to endure, and constancy to preserve.¹²⁸

Only certain thoughts are prayers. There are moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body the soul is on its knees.¹²⁹

Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the soul to God.¹³⁰

The prayer that begins with truthfulness and passes on into waiting will always end in thankfulness, triumph and praise.¹³¹

Our prayers should be for blessings in general, for God knows best what is good for us.¹³²

In the morning prayer is the key that opens to us the treasure of God's mercies and blessings; in the evening it is the key that shuts us up under His protection and safeguard.¹³³

He prayeth well, who loveth well,
Both man and bird and beast. ¹³⁴

Who rises from prayer a better man, his prayer is answered. ¹³⁵

Prayer does not change God, but changes him who prays. ¹³⁶

Prayer has the power of sanctifying life, because it brings God into life. Twice in the day it has been for ages the habit of the race to use this talisman once for the sanctification of the day; once for the sanctification of the night. ¹³⁷

Divine Master, grant that I may not ask
to be consoled as to console
to be understood as to understand
to be loved as to love
for it is in giving that we receive
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned
It is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life ¹³⁸

EFFORT

My Dear Children,

I have already dealt with work as a source of happiness. I want to write something about effort which every man or woman should make in ensuring happiness and elevating the norms of existence.

You know that no one is born a saint or a yogi. We are all born with weaknesses and faults. Every one of us has to put up sincere effort to be wise and converting this wisdom into conscious action.

Knowledge is barren. Its voice coming through intellect is unconvincing. It can bear fruit only when our action is based on it; when it grows into our being.

Harmony between knowledge and being is not easy to acquire. Once it is acquired its voice is irresistibly convincing. This needs sincere effort on our part.

Effort is the mother of achievement. I have found that the feeling 'I am tired' or 'that there is nothing worth doing' is mere an excuse not to put forth effort. Whenever these feelings come over me, I used to feel that I am no more than a piece of log, a tree or a vegetable. Whenever I was up and doing, then the creative power began—may be slowly may be with certain painfulness.

If there is no effort we will putrefy. Our fear of effort, therefore is illusory. Effort is the basic law of life. It is inherent in our freedom. If we realise this that will be the source of joy and work will be nothing but joy.

We often complain that God is not merciful and He has not helped us ! But we often forget that it is not God's business to help those who will not help themselves.

Man has soared high and has reached the moon. But his foot hold in the soil is tottering. He has forgotten that the secret needed to win the struggle for survival is to be soil minded ! He must relearn the gospel of the Dirty Hand. He must realise the roots of organism of life, is the soil.

In the economy of God, no effort however small, putforth in the right cause, fails of its effects.

It will never rain roses ; when we want to have more roses we must plant more rose plants.¹³⁹

Satisfaction is in the effort not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory.¹⁴⁰

The heights the great men reached and kept
were not attained by sudden flight.

But they, while their companions slept
were toiling upward in the Night.¹⁴¹

You have not done enough, you have never done enough, so long as it is still possible that you have something of value to contribute.¹⁴²

The greatest glory consists not in never falling but in rising every time we fall.¹⁴³

There is nothing which has not been bitter before being
ripe.¹⁴⁴

If you think you are beaten, you are,
If you think you dare not, you don't
If you like to win, but think you can't
It is almost certain you won't.

Life's battle don't always go,
To the strongest or fastest man,
But sooner or later the one who wins
Is the man who thinks he can.¹⁴⁵

GOODNESS

To be truly good, one must have faith in the goodness of others¹⁴⁶

Goodness is like a sunny day; it sheds its brightness upon everything.¹⁴⁷

You can only make good others by being good yourself ¹⁴⁸

True goodness springs from a man's own heart ¹⁴⁹

Be good and you will always be lonely ¹⁵⁰

A good man is kinder to his enemy than bad men to their friends ¹⁵¹

When we are happy we are always good but when we are good we are not always happy ¹⁵²

Better return good for evil, it is the sign of the real man; say not I will do so to him as he hath done to me. ¹⁵³

A good man may fall but he falls like a ball to bounce up again but an ignoble man falls like a lump of clay to be flattened for ever. ¹⁵⁴

It were better to live one single day in the development of good life than live a hundred years, a life corrupt and with a wandering mind. ¹⁵⁵

Die when I may, I want it said of me, by those who knew me best that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower, where I thought a flower would grow ¹⁵⁶

As there can be no goodness of life without goodness of principle, so neither can there be any goodness of principle that deserves the name without its being shown in goodness of life ¹⁵⁷

Good the more communicated to more abundant it grows ¹⁵⁸

There may be a certain pleasure in vice but there is higher in purity and virtue. The most commanding of all delights is the delight of goodness. ¹⁵⁹

Any fame of reputation based on politics or profession cannot last for ever but a conscience void of offence before God and man is an inheritance for eternity. ¹⁶⁰

The best portion of a good man's life is his little nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love. ¹⁶¹

Of all the virtues and dignities of the mind, goodness is the greatest, being the character of the diety and without it, man is a busy, mischievous wretched thing.¹⁶²

A good deed is never lost. He who plants kindness gathers love ; He who sows courtesy reaps friendship ; pleasure bestowed on a grateful mind will never be sterile but generally gratitude begets reward.¹⁶³

Whatever mitigates the woe or increases the happiness of others is a just criterion of goodness¹⁶⁴.

He that does good for good's sake seeks neither praise nor reward, though sure of both at last.¹⁶⁵

As I have come to understand men, it is clear to me that there is much more goodwill in them than appears. As the waters of the visible stream are small compared with those that flows below ground, so also the visible idealism of men in comparison with that which they cherish within them unrevealed or barely so.¹⁶⁶

We must remember only the good and forget the evil. Time, habits of business and experience have formed many noble men and modified many characters.¹⁶⁷

One should always act for one's own satisfaction and good, they that do much prattle, achieve nothing; for verily, there exists no means to satisfy everybody in the world.¹⁶⁸

Easy is the life of a shameless one, who with the boldness of a crow, is back-biting, forward, arrogant and corrupt. Hard is the life of a modest one who ever seeks purity, is detached, humble, clean in life and reflective.¹⁶⁹

Do all the good you can
In all the ways you can
To all the souls you can
In every place you can
At all the times you can
With all the zeal you can
As long as you can.¹⁷⁰

Do good and leave behind you a monument of virtue that storms of time can never destroy. Write your names in kindness, love and mercy on the hearts of thousands, you come in contact with year by year and you will never be lived in vain.¹⁷¹

Good and evil are only relative and not absolute. They depend on each one's opinion and on one's sense of values. The depth of hell is the height of heaven. The criticisms of the one serves as a tribute to the other. They either live together or die together.¹⁷²

MORALITY

There can be no real morality without knowledge, no real knowledge without morality. Both are bound together like heat and light in fire.¹⁷³

True morality consists not in following the beaten track but in finding out the true path for ourselves and fearlessly following it.¹⁷⁴

A man does what he must inspite of personal consequences, inspite of dangers and that is the basis of all human morality.¹⁷⁵

We have two kinds of morality side by side, one which we preach but practice and another which we practice and seldom preach.¹⁷⁶

What is moral is what you feel good after and what is immoral is what you feel bad after¹⁷⁷

Moral beauty is lovely, imperishable, perfect and permanent.¹⁷⁸

Morality without religion is like calories without vitamins, it may do some good, particularly in cutting out fanaticism but it will not build the inner strength.¹⁷⁹

Morality springs out of a deep recognition of the unity of life, out of love which is the most beautiful expression of that unit; it then assumes a form that bears its own authenticity.¹⁸⁰

There is but one morality as there is but one geometry.¹⁸¹

Morality knows nothing of geographical boundaries or distinctions of race.¹⁸²

All sects are different because they come from men; morality is everywhere the same, because it comes from God.¹⁸³

Discourse on morality and reflection on human nature are the best means we can make use of to improve our minds.¹⁸⁴

Every young man would do well to remember that all successful business stands on the foundation of morality.¹⁸⁵

The true grandeur of humanity is in moral elevation sustained, enlightened and decorated by the intellect of man,¹⁸⁶

No action which is not voluntary can be called moral. So long as we act like machines there can be no question of

any morality. Any action that is dictated by fear or by coercion of any kind ceases to be moral.¹⁸⁷

Love would turn to poison unless it is strictly limited by moral considerations.¹⁸⁸

CHARACTER

Your character depends upon the quality of the thoughts you entertain in your mind. The mental picture and ideals entertained by you determine your future. If you entertain noble thoughts, sublime ideals and holy pictures you will have a magnanimous character.¹⁸⁹

The end of all knowledge must be the building of character.¹⁹⁰

Character is a diamond that scratches every other stone.¹⁹¹

More than that arising from wisdom, strength, wealth, birth, that greatness arising from character alone is real greatness.¹⁹²

The richest wealth is reason
The greatest poverty is idiocy
The most frightful calamity is conceit
The greatest nobility is good character.¹⁹³

A nation is great not through dams across its rivers, or its ships on the sea or the deposits in its banks. It is great by the moral fibre and character of its citizens. Nations die when these weaken.¹⁹⁴

The noblest contribution which any man can make for the benefit of posterity is that of a good character. The bequest which any man can leave to the youth of his native land is that of a shining spotless example.¹⁹⁵

All our learning or recitation of vedas, correct knowledge of Sanskrit, Latin, English or what not, will avail as nothing if they do not enable us to cultivate absolute purity of heart ; The end of all knowledge must be building up of character.¹⁹⁶

Character is the humus, the soil on which all else must grow. ¹⁹⁷

Character is moral order seen through the medium of an individual nature—Men of character are the conscience of the society to which they belong. ¹⁹⁸

Character is like white paper, if once blotted, it can hardly ever be made to appear white as before. ¹⁹⁹

Character is not a matter of being obstinate in one's knowledge or strong in one's experience. There is character only when the mind is free of that background and is therefore capable of clarity. Only a mind that is clear has character ²⁰⁰

A good character in all cases is the fruit of personal exertion. It is not inherited from parents; it is not created by external advantages; it is no necessary appendage of birth, wealth, talent or place but it is the result of one's own endeavour. ²⁰¹

Character must be kept bright as well as clean. In purity of character and in politeness of manners labour to excell all, if you wish to equal many. ²⁰²

If wealth is lost, nothing is lost,
If health is lost, something is lost,
If character is lost, everything is lost. ²⁰³

The essential factors in character building are religion, morality and knowledge ²⁰⁴

Other things and qualities may come and go but character is that which lives and abides and is adorned and admired long after its possessor has left the earth ²⁰⁵

Character is property; it is the noblest of all possessions ²⁰⁶

SORROW

To the garland of these eleven eternal and never fading flowers let me add the following viz. a ball of musk that is, sorrow, which adds lustre, fragrance and beauty to the garland and another ball known as procrastination which hinders and clouds every chance of happiness and progress.

Dear Children,

Disappointment and sorrow come to all. When we are beset with sorrow we think that these troubles are exclusive to us. But you must realise that others have had the same troubles and they faced them boldly and found solutions for them. We are not lonely travellers on the path of life. As we journey through the maze of life, we are walking hand in hand with all humanity bearing the troubles, laughs, ups and downs with all others. You must remember that we could not rise higher if we had nothing higher to attain for. We could not overcome sin or sorrow if we don't have the higher conception of goodness and joyousness. Overcoming sorrow and troubles is the only way to lead a proper life.

At times when sorrows and troubles stare at us we often cry out, 'why should such a calamity fall upon me?' This is not a proper way of approach. Such calamities have befallen on great souls like Christ, Mohamad, Gandhi and a host of others. Why should not such a calamity come to me? Am I so much better than a Gandhi or a Christ? Even those good souls have suffered and conquered the troubles and sorrows and I must accept the facts of life and face them boldly. This should be our attitude.

You must have heard the story of the wise King who had chosen the five words 'This too shall pass away!' as the sole essence of the philosophy of life. Each sorrow, every trouble, every happiness will have its short span of time and then it passes away. Nothing is permanent here. The sorrow as much as the happiness or joy are transitory things which vanish with time. In accepting our sorrows and troubles, our pleasures and joys in a stoic way and bearing them bravely one can find the fulfilment of life.

We must take sorrows and troubles as the greatest teachers which mould us into true men.

Where there is sorrow there is holy ground.²⁰⁷

As night brings us to stars, sorrow brings us truth²⁰⁸

Sorrows are gardens; they plant flowers along waste places; and teach vine to cover barren heaps²⁰⁹

On the seeds of life, sorrow reads heavily, and leaves a print, time cannot wash away.²¹⁰

The deeper the sorrow the less tongues it has²¹¹

Sorrows are our best educators. A man can see further through a tear than a telescope.²¹²

Grief should be the instructor of the wise ; sorrow is knowledge ; they who know the most must mourn the deepest.²¹³

The path of sorrow and that path alone leads, to the land where sorrow is unknown ; no traveller ever reached that blessed abode who found not thorns and barriers on the road.²¹⁴

Sorrow was made for man, not for beasts ; yet if men melancholy too much, they become no better than beasts.²¹⁵

Our sorrows are like thunder-clouds, which seem black in the distance, but grow lighter as they approach.²¹⁶

Sorrows harmonise our race ; tears are the showers that fertilise the world²¹⁷

It is often in sorrow that our lives are taught their sweetest songs. There are human lives that never in the calm of quiet days yield the music that is in them. It is only when the breezes of sorrow and trouble sweep over them that they give out soft murmurings of song.

Without experiencing sorrow we cannot fully experience joy. The deeper our sorrows, the greater the heights we can attain if only we accept them with understanding and use them.

If all the world were music
Our hearts would often long
For one sweet strain of silence
to break the endless song.
If life were always merry
our souls would seek relief,
And rest from weary laughter
In the quiet arms of grief ²¹⁸

Let me quote another piece from Robert Browning
Hamilton :

I walked a mile with pleasure
She chatted all the way
But left me none the wiser
For all she had to say-
I walked a mile with sorrow
And never a word said she
But Oh ! The things I learned from her
When sorrow walked with me.

If you shed tears over the loss of the Sun when darkness
crops over, you will certainly miss the light of the Stars
also. ²¹⁹

PROCRASTINATION

Procrastination is the thief of time. It is much worse than that however. It is the destroyer of initiative and it closes the door to advancement for many people.²²⁰

By putting of things beyond their proper time, one duty treads upon the heels of another and all duties are felt as irk-some obligation—a yoke beneath which we fret and lose our peace.²²¹

To be always intending to lead a new life, but never to find time to set about it. This is as if a man should put off eating and drinking and sleeping from one day and night to another, until he is starved and destroyed.²²²

Every duty which is bidden to wait, returns with seven fresh duties at its back.²²³

From the above you have an idea as to what procrastination does for us. Every one in these days suffer under the feeling of being pressed for time. We do not seem to catch up with things as we used to do. we are afraid to sit down with only our thoughts for company because these thoughts inevitably turn on something we should be doing.

Much of this feeling is due to procrastination the habit of needlessly putting off things to which we should attend. The putting off is in turn caused by inertia and lack of planning.

This is a serious problem, because procrastination does more than almost any other habit to deprive us of satisfaction, success and happiness. It does not solve any problem when we toss it into the tray marked 'pending'.

More than two centuries ago Edward Young disappointed in law, politics, and in his thirty-fifth year rectorship of a small church wrote the often quoted line—"Procrastination is the thief of time."

In fact procrastination is much more. It is the thief of our self-respect. It nags at us and spoils our fun. It deprives us the fullest realisation of our ambitions and hopes.

In business or for that matter in any walk of life the man who hesitates is lost. Of course one must seek quite rightly to bring to bear on the decisions the mature judgment that is the outcome of thought directed towards solving a problem but there is a deadline beyond which he must not prolong his deliberation. He must make a decision and not postpone them or his opportunity for fulfilment will disappear.

In our cultural aspect of life also procrastination is equally damaging. There is usually no want of desire on the part of most of us to arrive at the results of self-culture but there is great temptation not to pay the necessary cost of it in time and work.

Even our leisure is eaten up by procrastination. Most of us complain that we have no time for leisure. Life for such of us is a steady grind and a mad dream.

Remember, people who are habitually behind in their work are as habitually behind success. You do not see listless or languid people at the top of the executive ladder.

Young people particularly need to beware of putting off things. In maturity the procrastinating man finds himself one of the many ordinary, dispensable workers without any achievement to his credit.

If you cultivate the trait that others should help you and some one else should do the work for you and if your parents out of indulgence did more for you than they should have that will surely lend you later in life to be a chronic procrastinator.

When you grow up you will find that your habit leads you to unending ills. You will be actually putting off living, to some fictioned future date. By this not only you will be unhappy but will be missing the present and its golden opportunities for rich living. By this you will put off not only jobs and duties but happiness and achievement.

A MINE OF INSPIRATION

Hereunder I give you a collection of noble thoughts from which you may draw your inspiration to face the world and life as befitting a real man.

Morning is the proper time for serious meditation. For, the morning is the youth of the day, when everything is bright, fresh and easy of attainment. We feel strong then, and all our faculties are completely at our disposal. Do not shorten the morning by getting up late; look upon it as the quintessence of life, as to a certain extent sacred. Evening is like an old age; we are languid, talkative, silly. Each day is a little life.

Limitation always makes for happiness. We are happy in proportion, as our range of vision, our sphere of work, our point of contact with the world are restricted and circumscribed. Simplicity therefore, as far as it can be attained and even monotony, in our manner of life, if it does not mean that we are bored, will contribute to happiness just because under such circumstances, life, and consequently the burden which is the essential concomitant of life, will be least felt.¹

Be satisfied with your business and learn to love what you were bred to; and as to the remainder of your life, be entirely resigned and let the Gods do their pleasure with

your body and your soul. And when this is done, be neither slave nor tyrant to anybody.²

Where there is charity and wisdom, there is neither fear nor ignorance ; where there is patience and humility there is neither anger nor worry ; where there is poverty and joy there is no cupidity nor avarice ; where there is quiet and meditation there is neither solicitude nor dissipation. Where there is faith in the Lord to guard the house, the enemy cannot find a way to enter.³

Think the purest thoughts and banish all idle and impure thoughts. Breathe the freshest air day and night, establish a balance between bodily and mental work ; stand erect, sit erect and be neat and clean in every one of your acts and let these be an expression of your inner condition.⁴

There are persons who ponder on the shortcomings of their friends. There is nothing to be gained by this. I have always paid attention to the merits of my adversaries and have derived advantages from doing so.⁵

By eating ordinary grass the cow produces life giving milk. But the cobra drinking this life giving milk produces only the poison. Even so good men make improvements upon even commonplace things whereas evil minded persons do harm to the best of intentions.⁶

Good company imparts some goodness to wickedmen but wicked company cannot impart wickedness to the goodmen. The rose does not partake of the smell of the earth on which it falls but the earth does.⁷

Why do the rivers carry the waters? What for the cow gives milk? For whom indeed do the trees bear luscious fruits? Are they for their own benefits? No. They are for sustaining others. Even so are the attainments of the great made use of for the benefit of others.⁸

We are all lamps and our life constitutes the flame of that lamp. When the supply of oxygen is cut off, this lamp will go out. The best we can do therefore is to keep the lamp clean.⁹

Avoid the man of temper, the selfish, the boastful, the conceited, the scornful, the liar, lest you acquire his way of thinking.¹⁰

Remember at anything that shall befall thee to turn thyself and seek what faculty there hast for making use of it. If thou see a beautiful person find your faculty for self-mastery. If toil is laid upon thee, thou will find the faculty of perseverance. If thou art reviled thou will find patience; And making this thy won't thou shalt not be carried away by the appearance.¹¹

How singular is the thing called pleasure and how curiously related to pain and sorrow ; which may be thought to be the opposite of it ; for they are never present to man at the same instant and yet he who pursues either is generally compelled to take the other, as if they have two bodies but were joined by a single head.¹²

With shadows of the passing cloud,
New grain and knavish friends ;
With women's love and youth and wealth
Enjoyments and happiness quickly ends.¹³

It is not the mark of wise men to follow elders blindly. To do so will be like the jackal branding itself with a hot iron to copy the tiger's stripes. ¹⁴

To antagonise one's brothers and sisters by heeding to the wife's words will be like trying to cross a river by riding on a dog's tail.¹⁵

Verily God had fumbled when he made some benevolent and others rich. If not why does gold not have any aroma while the ugly looking musk is full of it ?¹⁶

One must win over the miser with money, the obstinate with *anjali*, the fool with music, the learned with truth, the great with prostration, the warrior with fight, the cad with bribe and the equal with prowess.¹⁷

Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do which must be done whether you like it or not. Being forced to work and forced to do your best will breed in you temperance, self-control, diligence, strength of will, content and a hundred other virtues which the idle never know.¹⁸

We are on this earth, with only a short time to live and we have many irreplaceable hours brooding over grievances that will be forgotten by us and by every body.¹⁹

Neither in the sky nor in the midst of the sea or by entering into clefts of mountains is there a place where, stationing himself, a man can escape the consequences of his evil deeds. Our good and evil deeds follow us continually like shadows.²⁰

Adjust according to the needs of time and place. Be strong in woe and humble in weal, and do not lose your balance in pains or pleasures. Do not befriend any one too much nor show unfriendliness to any. Both are serious faults and therefore seek the golden mean.²¹

He who walks through life with an even temper and a gentle patience, patient within himself, patient with others, patient with difficulties and crosses, he has an every day greatness beyond that which is won in battle or chanted in cathedrals.²²

No matter about wearing a crown ; make sure that you have a head worthy of wearing one. No matter about purple ; make sure that you have a heart worthy of purple. No matter about a throne on which to sit ; make sure that your life is regal in its own intrinsic character.²³

Fortunate is he who, amid the world's temptations keeps his crown of honour, lustrous and unspotted. Wretched is he who, in the battle of life finds that some evil blow has struck from his brow, the emblem of his kingliness. Dispicable is he, who with deliberate purpose uplifts his own hand to discrown his own head.²⁴

Don't keep for ever on the public road, going only where others have gone. Leave the beaten path occasionally and dive into the woods. You will be certain to find something that you have not seen before.²⁵

We do not need more material development
We need more spiritual development ;
We do not need more intellectual power,
We need more moral power ;
We do not need more knowledge,
We need more character ;
We do not need more Government
We need more culture ;
We do not need more of the things seen,
We need more of things unseen.²⁶

No part of the body is more excellent than the pupil of the eye. If the heart is upright the pupil is bright if not it is dull. Hear what a man has to say and watch the pupil of the eye while he speaks. Can he conceal his character from you ? ²⁷

Wise men are instructed by reason, men of lesser understanding by experience, the most ignorant by necessity and beasts by nature.²⁸

Every one should be his own physician, we ought to assist and not to force nature. Eat with moderation what agrees with your constitution. Nothing is good for the body but what we can digest. What medicine can procure digestion ? Exercise ! What will recruit strength ? Sleep ! ²⁹

For every ill beneath the Sun
There is some remedy or none -
If there be one, resolve and find it
If not submit and never mind it.³⁰

If you invite the minister *Bhoga*, you must be prepared for the visit along with him of his private secretary *Roga*.³¹

A righteous man is like a sandal tree which affords scent even to the axe that cuts it.³²

If there is righteousness in the heart
There will be beauty of character,
If there is beauty of character
There will be harmony in the family home
If there is harmony in the home
There will be order in the nation ;
Where there is order in the nation
There will be peace in the world. ³³

Not gold but men can make
a people great and strong ;
Men who for truth and honour's sake
Stand fast and suffer long.
Brave men who work while others sleep
And who dare while others fly.
They build a nation's pillars deep
and lift them to the sky. ³⁴

He who has injured thee is either stronger or weaker. If weaker spare him, if stronger spare yourself. ³⁵

Good breeding consists in concealing how much we think of ourselves and how little we think of other persons. ³⁶

Be studious in your profession
And you will be learned.
Be industrious and frugal
And you will be rich.

Be sober and temperate
And you will be healthy
Be in general virtuous
And you will be happy.³⁷

Turn thine eyes into thyself and beware thou judge not the deeds of other men. In judging of others a man laboureth in vain, often erreth and easily sinneth, but in judging and examining himself he always laboureth fruitfully.³⁸

There will be no peace until there is justice
No justice until there is understanding ;
No understanding until there is honesty ;
No honestly until there is humility
No humility until there is wisdom
No wisdom until there is love.³⁹

It is a good and safe rule to sojourn in every place as if you meant to spend your life there, never omitting an opportunity of doing a kindness or speaking a true word or making a friend.⁴⁰

I expect to pass through this world but once. If therefore there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow human being let me do it now, for I may not pass this way again.⁴¹

Thunder is really impressive but it is lightning that does the work.⁴²

Give and not count the cost ;
Fight and not heed the wounds ;
Toil and not seek for rest.⁴³

History is full of men who triumphed over hardships. The poet Pope was a hopeless invalid. Cervantes stuttered, Chopin and Theodore Roosevelt were sickly, puny children. Stephen A Douglas was hunch-backed. Edison was deaf. Milton was blind and Franklin Roosevelt was a cripple. But all these were victors over handicaps.⁴⁴

There is so much good in the worst of us ;
And so much bad in the best of us ;
That it ill becomes any of us
To look down on the rest of us.⁴⁵

Study removes ignorance, *Japa* destroys sins, silence avoids quarrels, and wakefulness prevents fear.⁴⁶

If we begin with certainties we shall end with doubts, but if we begin with doubts and are patient in them, we shall end in certainties.⁴⁷

• Try not to become a man of success but rather try to be a man of value •

Before God we are all equally wise and equally foolish ..

We cannot despair of humanity. Since we are ourselves human beings.⁴⁸

In the kingdom of God, reason, intellect and learning are of no avail. There the dumb speak, the blind see and the deaf hear.⁴⁹

The best preacher is the heart ; the best teacher is time ; the best book is the world and the best friend is God.⁵⁰

Jail is the punishment for the thief, humiliation is the punishment for the learned, separation is the punishment for lovers ; and non-speaking is the punishment for the friend.⁵¹

If you are silent you are taken to be a dumb man ; if you competently talk you are taken as a flatterer or a chatterbox ; if you move at a distance you are taken as timid ; if you are forbearing you are called a coward ; if you don't forbear you will almost be called not a man of good parentage.⁵²

■
There are two little words in our language which I always admire-Try and Trust. You know not what you can or cannot effect until you try and if you make your trial in the exercise of trust in God, mountains of imaginary

difficulties will vanish as we approach them, and facilities will be afforded which you never anticipated.⁵³

There are pearls in the deep sea, but you must hazard all perils to get them. If you fail to get at them by a single dive, do not conclude that the sea is without pearls. Dive again and again and you are sure to be rewarded in the end. So also in the quest for God.⁵⁴

If there were no shadows, there would be no sunshine and everything in life must have its anti-thesis.⁵⁵

Sow a thought you reap an act ;
Sow an act, you reap a habit ;
Sow a habit and you reap a character
Sow a character and you reap a destiny.⁵⁶

As a horse when he has run, a dog when he has caught, a bee when it has made its honey ; so a man when he has done a good act, does not call out for others to come and see, but he goes on to another act, as a vine goes on to provide again the grapes in season. Art thou not content that thou hast done something comfortable to thy nature and dost thou seek to be paid for it, just as if the eye demanded a recompense for seeing or the feet should demand a recompense for walking ? ⁵⁷

The great happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved, loved for ourselves or rather loved inspite of ourselves.⁵⁸

Salt and Camphor look alike; but if you try their flavours and examine them they are diverse; thus do the virtuous differ from other men.⁵⁹

Trust a man with work, who has love, wisdom, a clear vision and lack of desire to possess⁶⁰

Happy is he who has overcome all selfishness, happy is he who has attained peace, and happy is he who has found Truth.⁶¹

The moon illuminates the night, the Sun illuminates the day, Dharma illuminates all the three worlds; and the noble son illuminates his clan.⁶²

He who sows for you thorns, for him you should sow flowers, you will have blossoms at the time of spring, he will regret to find thorns.⁶³

A sacred burden is the life you bear
Look at it, lift it, bear it solemnly
Walk beneath it steadfastly

Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin
But onwards, upwards till the goal you win.⁶⁴

If men would consider not so much wherein they differ,
as wherein they agree there would be far less of uncharitableness and angry feeling in this world.⁶⁵

The time to guard against corruption, tyranny and vice is before they shall have gotten hold of us. It is better to keep the wolf out of the fold than to trust to drawing his teeth and talons after he shall have entered.⁶⁶

Gold is the wonderful clearer of understanding, it dissipates every doubt and scruples in an instant, accommodates itself to the meanest capacities, silences the loud and the clamorous and brings over the most obstinate and inflexible.⁶⁷

A sympathetic heart is worth a bushful of sympathetic words. Actions follow the heart's desire and they speak louder than words.⁶⁸

By unrighteousness man prospers, gains what appears desirable, conquers enemies but perishes at the root.⁶⁹

If you know your enemy and know thyself, you need not fear the results of a hundred battles. If you know yourself

but not the enemy, for every victory you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither yourself nor the enemy, you will succumb in every battle.⁷⁰

He is the son who pleases his father with his good character. She is the wife who is always watchful of her husband's welfare. He is the friend who does not leave but partakes of all the misery and happiness. Only fortunate people can get these three.⁷¹

Be civil to all, sociable to many, familiar with few, friend to one and enemy to none.⁷²

If thou wouldst estimate thyself, put away wealth, and honours and scrutinise thyself within.⁷³

It is a pleasure indeed to enjoy prosperity after experiencing poverty. It is like the lighting of a house-lamp in pitch darkness. But to revert to poverty from prosperity will only make a living corpse of man.⁷⁴

If you wish to be rich—give
 If you wish to be poor—grasp
 If you want abundance—scatter
 If you want to be needy—hoard⁷⁵

The noblest must be won by service, the fool by threats, the mean by small gifts,, equals by exhibition of like valour and God by truth.⁷⁶

Virtue is my father, wisdom is my mother, knowledge that gives discrimination is my friend. Courage is my brother. What is the good of others falsely claiming these relationships ?⁷⁷

To an idler where is education? To the uneducated where is wealth? To the impoverished where are friends? To one who has no friends where is happiness ? ⁷⁸

You cannot conquer sleep by dreams, women by desire, the fire by faggots and the thirsty by liquors.

A WARNING

My Dear Children,

We are carried away by the glamour of science. The futile controversy between spirituality and science is raging wide and long.

Science reveals to us the inexhaustible richness of the world, its unexpectedness and wonder. But it does not profess to solve all problems. There are regions where its writ does not run. The ultimate questions are too deep or mysterious for science. A scientific study of the world does not give us a complete knowledge of the world.

From physics to chemistry, from chemistry to biology from biology to psychology, from psychology to logic and aesthetics we seem to have an unbroken, continuous, logical chain, a series of causes and effects ending up with parliamentary governments and large universities,

“ But the mystery of the emergence of life from a non-living environment, of consciousness from an unconscious environment, the emergence of the ideas of truth, goodness and beauty from an environment, which does not have them are blank spaces in our knowledge which cannot be filled. There are problems like the relation of body and mind, the nature of self-consciousness which are puzzles for science.

Belief in a realm of spirit is not based on the gaps of knowledge, but in the sense of mystery in the very heart of

creation, inherent in the way in which the world works, obeying certain order and yet emerging into novelties. God does not reveal Himself in nature and history by fits, only in crises and catastrophes.

Where scientific knowledge ends and the realm of mystery begins may shift but there are two spheres, one capable of scientific explanation and the other not, which will always remain so. There is a mystery in the heart of the world. To deny it is not to destroy it. He cannot weigh and measure the beauty of a flower, the value of saintliness. To put it plainly the world of truth and falsehood, right and wrong, beauty and ugliness, is different from the world of science. The world of scientific facts and the world of value are too different worlds. These two belong to one whole, controlled by a presence, greater than we are and is called Absolute Reality.

Hence the spheres of philosophy and science are not the same. Philosophy is right belief, right feeling and right action. It is all the three. It is not intellectual conviction, emotional ecstasy and social service. It is all the three. The passage from the intellectual to the spiritual is not a quantitative accumulation but a qualitative leap. The transition from *vijnana* (science) to *Ananda* (bliss) is a leap from one orbit to another !

If inspite of the great advance of science and knowledge we have accumulated we are still in a perilous state, in an

unhappy predicament, it is because we are indifferent to the higher laws of the universe.

What is it that prevents the use of the great inventions for making the world into a happier and better place than it is? The passions of the human heart, stupidity, cussedness, vileness and wildness. We must tame the savageness of man. This can be done only by philosophy or spiritualism, and not by science. If we are truly spiritual we will not only look beyond science but also will cut off with a drastic hand so much that has come down to us in the name of philosophy which is repugnant to our mind and heart.

The universe now looks like a great thought than like a great machine. Matter seems to be really a manifestation or depository of energy. The tremendous progress of science has pushed the frontiers of knowledge from the concrete to the abstract. The profound truth that all matter is nothing but energy seems to have been perceived by the rishis without the aid of science as clearly as it is now understood in the lavishly equipped laboratory.

It is energy which takes the rocket to the moon and it is energy which makes the seed sprout from the earth and grow into a tree.

Fuelled by a million man-made wings of fire
The Rocket tore through the sky
And everyone cheered !
Fuelled by only a thought from God
The seedling urged its way
The thickness of the black
And as it pierced the heavy ceiling of the soil
And launched itself up into outer space—
No one even clapped !

The rockets' performance is explicable and is known as science ; while the seedling's performance is inexplicable and termed miraculous. Yet the claps of the limited mortal are reserved for the former." (Condensed from a speech of Mr. N. A. Palhivala.)

Hence my children, happy is the man whose life has been transformed by the ancient insights that lead to the sense of values which material education or material riches are powerless to bestow.

A YAKSHA PRASNA

You must have heard about the 'Yaksha-Prasna' in which the eldest of the Pandus—Yudhistira wisely answers several questions put to him by Yaksha. Hereunder you have a greek counterpart of Dharmaputra, Miletus who silences a sophist with his wisdom-packed answers. It will benefit you if you ponder over these questions and answers.

Q — What is the oldest of all things ?

A — God. Because he has always existed.

Q — What is the beautiful of all things ?

A — The world. Because it is the work of God.

Q — What is the greatest of all things ?

A — Space. Because it contains all that has been created.

Q — What is the most constant of all things ?

A — Hope. Because it still remains with man after he has lost everything else.

Q — What is the best of all things ?

A — Virtue ; because without it there is nothing good.

Q — What is the quickest of all things ?

A — Thought. Because in less than a moment it can fly to the end of the universe.

Q — What is the strongest of all things ?

A — Necessity ; which makes man face all the dangers of life.

Q — What is the easiest of all things ?

A — Giving advice.

Q — What is the most difficult of all things ?

A — To know thyself.

Q — What is the wisest of all things ?

A — Time ; Because it discovers all things.

(From—Indian Patriot)

FAREWELL

Children, before bidding adieu, I wish you would be—

- “ a little more disciplined, a less wayward ;
- a little more informed, a little less ignorant ;
- a little more understanding, a little less pedantic ;
- a little more exact, a little less vague ;
- a little more sympathetic, a little less apathetic ;
- a little more helpful, a little less indifferent ;
- a little more selfless, a little less selfish ;
- a little more tolerant, a little less fanatic ;
- a little more loving, a little less hateful ;
- a little more kind, a little less callous ;
- a little more considerate, a little less misunderstanding ;
- a little more broadminded, a little less insular ;
- a little more indulgent, a little less impatient ;
- a little more performing, a little less promising ;
- a little more optimistic, a little less pessimistic ;
- a little more rational, a little less irrational ;
- a little more silent, a little less noisy ;
- a little more listening, a little less speaking ;
- a little more humble, a little less arrogant ;
- a little more idealist, a little less worldly ;
- a little more appreciative, a little less critical ;
- a little more liberal, a little less conservative ;
- a little more forgiving, a little less revengeful ;
- a little more trustful, a little less suspicious ;
- a little more character, a little less fame ;

a little more smiles, a little less tears ;
a little more platonic, a little less sensual ;
a little more sweetness, a little less bitterness ;
a little more ' yes ', a little less ' no '.

So that both body and soul may be enlarged, ennobled, and enlightened ; so that when it comes to laying down the body, we could say that we have used the God-given gifts of body to an objective always ennobling, ever bent towards the realisation of God in man." (Anon)

Let me wish further that you may have-

Enough happiness to keep you sweet,
Enough trials to keep you strong,
Enough sorrows to keep you human,
Enough hope to keep you happy,
Enough failure to keep you humble,
Enough success to keep you eager,
Enough friends to keep your comfort,
Enough wealth to meet your needs,
Enough enthusiasm to look forward,
Enough faith to banish desperation,
Enough determination to make each day better
than yesterday. (Anon)

Dear Children,

*As you come to the end of this book, it is my prayer that
you can say—*

“ Softly I closed the book as in a dream
And let its’ echoes linger to redeem,
silence with music, darkness with its gleam ”.

POSTSCRIPT

My Children

I am your father. But I am also a human being. I have my weaknesses, I am not the great wonder-worker you think me to be. I am not a technician, an engineer, a doctor, a chief, a millionaire. I am not a saint but just an ordinary man pursuing a far too ordinary course of life with all the frailties and foibles inherent in man.

*“ There, children you have the dismal truth.
Now obvious as a missing tooth.
Your doom it is to be the children of one
As fragile and human as any one
Should you like it, you'd overwhelm me.
And if you hate it, please don't tell me.”*

FARE WELL

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